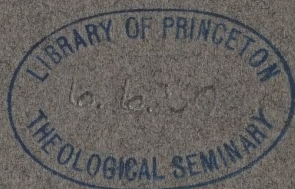


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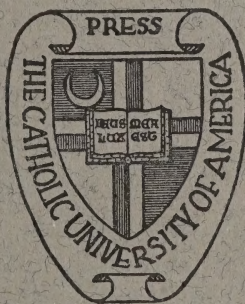
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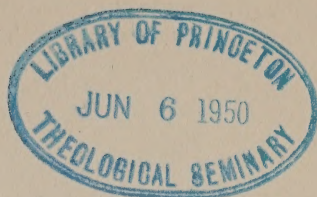


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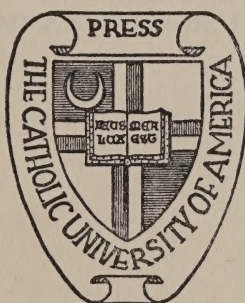
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ABBREVIATIONS

AER	<i>American Ecclesiastical Review.</i>
AAS	<i>Acta Apostolicae Sedis.</i>
ASS	<i>Acta Sanctae Sedis.</i>
CDN	<i>Sant' Ambrogio nel XVI Centenario della Nascita.</i>
CSEL	<i>Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum.</i>
CUAPS	<i>The Catholic University of America Patristic Studies.</i>
CUASCA	<i>The Catholic University of America Studies in Christian Antiquity.</i>
DThC	<i>Dictionnaire d'Archéologie Chrétienne et de Liturgie.</i>
FlP	<i>Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique.</i>
DACL	<i>Florilegium Patristicum.</i>
Gr	<i>Gregorianum.</i>
JQR	<i>Jewish Quarterly Review.</i>
PL	<i>Migne, Patres Latini.</i>
RdJ	<i>Rouet de Journal.</i>
SPCK	<i>Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge.</i>

FOREWORD

The fourth century of the Christian era saw the rise of one of the great Fathers and Doctors of the Western Church, St. Ambrose of Milan, who, while not a speculative genius, being neither original nor profound in his thinking, did furnish men of average common sense with a sound doctrinal foundation whereon they could safely build the structure of practical religion. Although he cannot be considered a theologian of the highest rank, yet his theological knowledge is not to be passed over lightly. For as one author correctly remarked, Ambrose "in many respects exercised an important influence on the development of Western religious thought."

In the following pages, which form a part of the complete dissertation, it is our purpose to present the Ambrosian teaching on a subject which comprises and is inseparable from the greater part of his writings, the relation of the Church to the Synagogue.

To understand St. Ambrose's teaching concerning *res judaicae* it is necessary to keep two factors in mind, namely, his religious policy as regards the State, and his allegorico-mystical interpretation of the Scriptures in proposing his conception of Christianity in its historical and theological setting.

In the first place, St. Ambrose strongly defended the independence and the authority of the Church in its own sphere. In his opinion the Church and the State were two allied but independent powers, neither of which should meddle in the affairs of the other. Yet, in the cause of faith, since the Catholic Church is the one and true religion, the State could never use or even contemplate measures detrimental to the prestige and safety of the Church. The writings of St. Am-

brose reveal that in this respect his actions were always motivated by what he conceived to be the best interests of the Church.

Secondly, while it is quite possible that contemporaneous events might have influenced his thoughts concerning the present position of Judaism in the realm of the True Faith, it is much more probable that the real cause for his seemingly condemnatory treatment of the Jews and the Synagogue was the fact that he wished to demonstrate the superiority of the Christian way of life.

Where could he find plain and popular examples uniquely fitted for his instructions on the excellence of the true Christian spirit if not in the events and personages of the biblical narrative? The enthusiastic ardor which moved him to lead souls to the peak of the spiritual life was founded on his mystical interpretation of the Pauline dictum, "the spirit giveth life." The preceding part of this text he applied to the Jews, whose works he condemned because their sole aim was external legalism, the perfect fulfillment of the letter of the Law.

It is because of his continual comparison of the Christians with the Jews in this manner that his writings abound in remarks deprecating the literal-minded Jews, making them, as it were, "a byword among the Gentiles, a shaking of the head among the peoples." It is because of this, too, that he opposes the letter to the spirit; the Law to faith and grace. For the Jews lived under the bondage of the Law, the Christians live in the freedom of the Gospel. The resultant teaching of St. Ambrose is that the underlying principles of the Gospel, namely, grace, faith and the promise, antedated the Law and were operative from the beginning; that Christianity is both older and superior to Judaism; and that the *Ecclesia ex gentibus congregata*, usurping the place of the Synagogue, is the full flowering of the revelations of the Old Testament.

The author wishes to express his sincere gratitude to the Very Reverend Raphael Grande, Father General of the Franciscan Friars of the Atonement, for the opportunity to pursue graduate

studies at the Catholic University of America, and also the members of the Faculty of the School of Sacred Theology for their direction and kind assistance. Sincere thanks are also due the Reverend Johannes Quasten for his suggestion of the title and subject-matter of this dissertation, the Reverend Eugene Burke, C.S.P., and the Reverend Edmond Benard for their kindly interest and helpful criticism. Lastly, he is grateful to the members of his Society who by their deeply appreciated encouragement and help have contributed to the completion of this work, especially, Father Samuel Cummings, Superior of the Atonement Seminary, Father Eugene Figueroa, Guardian of St. Joseph's Friary, Saranac Lake, Father David Gannon, Pastor of Our Lady of the Atonement Mission, Kinston, N. C., and Father Edward Hanahoe, Librarian at the Atonement Seminary.

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INTRODUCTION

In the year 388, during the reign of Theodosius the Great, an incident took place in one of the Eastern provinces of the Roman empire,¹ at Callinicum in Mesopotamia, which caused great anxiety to the bishop of Milan. It was reported² that under the instigation of the resident bishop a synagogue had been burned. When St. Ambrose heard that the emperor, whose vehemence of temper he well knew,³ had impetuously commanded this prelate and the Christian laity to rebuild the edifice at their own expense,⁴ he immediately dispatched a letter from Aquileia⁵ protesting in the name of Christian principles that the "most blessed"⁶ Theodosius rescind this edict.

¹ Concerning this riot, cf. F. Barth, "Ambrosius und die Synagoge zu Callinicum," *Theologische Zeitschrift aus der Schweiz* 6 (1889), 65-86.

² Cf. *Epistle* 41, 1 (PL 16, 956): Nam cum relatum esse synagogam Judaeorum incensam a christianis, auctore episcopo . . . jussum erat, me Aquileiae posito, ut synagoga ab episcopo readificaretur.

³ Cf. *Epistle* 51, 4 (*ibid.* 998), where he addresses Theodosius with the words: habes naturae impetum.

⁴ The emperor Julian the Apostate set this precedent in 362 when he commanded Eleuzos, bishop of Cyzicus, to rebuild a Novatian church, cf. Socrates, *Hist. Eccl.* III, ii. Julian had refused Christians permission to preach or teach, cf. *Epistle* 17, 4 (PL 16, 824); P. Allard, *Julien l'Apostat*, 2 ed., vol. 2 (Paris, 1903), 330; E. J. Martin, *The Emperor Julian* SPCK (London, N. Y., 1919), 27 ff.

⁵ Authors dispute whether Ambrose wrote this letter from Aquileia or Milan. For summation of both sides, see, F. Homes Dudden, *Saint Ambrose, His Life and Times*, 2 (Oxford, 1935), 371.

⁶ That is, *clementissime*. In his correspondence with the emperors Ambrose uses such titles as: *christianissimus*, *tranquillissimus*, *fidelissimus*, cf. A. Engelbrecht, *Das Titelwesen bei den spätlateinischen Epistolographen* (Vienna, 1883), 9, 19-24; Mary B. O'Brien, *Titles of Address in Christian Epistolography to 543 A. D.* CUAPS 21 (Washington, D. C., 1930), *passim*.

In this Epistle⁷ Ambrose does not dwell for long on the legal aspect of the affair, but rather construes his arguments to point out the inexpedient and unpopular character of a measure which would gravely humiliate the whole Church before the eyes of the Jews. As he wrote: "Therefore shall a place be erected for the unbelief of the Jews out of the spoils of the Church, and should the patrimony which by the favor of Christ has been acquired for Christians be transferred to the treasury of unbelievers?"⁸ Representing the Jews as setting forth this solemnity among their feast days, in memory of having triumphed over the people of Christ,⁹ Ambrose draws his most forceful plea from the fact that:

Therefore there is no adequate cause for so great a commotion, that the people should be so severely punished for the burning of a building. Moreover, much less because a synagogue was burned: a place of unbelief, a house of impiety, a shelter of madness, which God Himself condemned.¹⁰

It is to be understood that Ambrose's great interest in the affairs of State, especially those activities of the coeval rulers of the empire which had to do with the spiritual as well as the material welfare of the Church, proceeded from his deep-rooted belief that under Divine Guidance the empire was participating in the fulfillment of that mission Christ had given to His Church. For from the beginning of the Christian era Rome had presented

⁷ *Epistle* 40 (PL 16, 946-956).

⁸ *Ibid.* 10 (*ibid.* 949): Erit igitur locus Judaeorum perfidiae factus de exuviis Ecclesiae: et patrimonium, quod favore Christi acquisitum est christianis, hoc transferetur ad donaria perfidorum?

⁹ Cf. *Ibid.* 20 (*ibid.* 952): Hanc dabis triumphum Judaeis de Ecclesia Dei? . . . Referet Judaeorum populus hanc solemnitatem in dies festos suos . . . Addet hanc celebritatem, significans se de Christi populo triumphum egisse.

¹⁰ *Ibid.* 14 (*ibid.* 950): Non est ergo causa tantae commotione idonea; ut propter aedificii exustionem in populum tam severe vindicetur: multo autem minus quia synagoga incensa est, perfidiae locus, impietatis domus, amentiae receptaculum, quod Deus damnavit ipse.

to mankind a centralized government which auspiciously facilitated the universal diffusion of the True Faith.

Ambrose noted this fact in his discussion of the Psalm verse (45:10), concerning the cessation of war by the hand of God. Here he recounts that immediately preceding the time when the Roman empire reached out to the ends of the earth, not only did king fight against king, but even the Romans themselves were engaged in civil wars.¹¹ World-wide peace came about, he remarks:

that the apostles might safely be sent throughout the world by the Lord Jesus, Who said (Mt. 28:18): "Go, teach all nations." To them, indeed, kingdoms were opened up which had been closed by barbarous insurrections, as India to Thomas, Persia to Matthew. However, that they might visit more parts of the world, in the beginning of the Church He spread the power of the Roman empire over the whole world, and by giving peace, He brought together those of contrary minds and of different places. They taught all men living under the rule of one empire to confess with faithful eloquence the rule of One Almighty God.¹²

In view of this divine intervention, Ambrose held that the continued peace of the empire was dependent on and coincident with the upholding of the True Faith,¹³ which he symbolized in that

¹¹ Cf. *Explan. Ps.* 45, 21 (CSEL 64, Pet. 343): et uere, antequam Romanum diffunderetur imperium, non solum singularum urbium reges aduersum se proeliabantur, sed etiam ipsi Romani bellis frequenter ciuilibus atterebantur.

¹² *Ibid.* (*ibid.* 344): ut recte per totum orbem apostoli mitterentur dicente domino Iesu: *euntes docete omnes gentes*. illis quidem etiam interclusa barbaricis motibus regna patuerunt, ut Thoma India, Matthaео Persia. sed tamen, quo plura obirent spatia terrarum, in exortu ecclesiae potestatem Romani imperii toto orbe diffudit et dissidentium mentes terrarumque diuortia donata pace composuit. didicerunt omnes homines sub uno terrarum imperio uiuentes unius dei omnipotentis imperium fidei eloquio confiteri.

¹³ Ambrose points out that the empire grew weak where the Faith was

Sacred Nail from the Cross (which Constantine had set in his diadem) as holding together the far-flung Roman rule.¹⁴ Therefore he reasoned that in the rendering of general support and assistance to each other, both the Church and the State must seek divine aid. St. Ambrose underscored this idea in his famous letter of excommunication addressed to Theodosius,¹⁵ whose atrocious massacre of some 7,000 Thessalonians had profoundly shocked the Christian world. Alluding to the revelation he himself had concerning the emperor's exclusion from the assemblage of the Church and participation in the Sacraments, he observed that:

Our God warns us in many ways, by heavenly signs, by the commands of the prophets: even by the vision of sinners He wishes us to understand that we should pray to Him in order that He might remove dissensions, that He might preserve peace for you who rule, that the faith and tranquillity of the Church might persist, for whom it is useful that emperors be christian and devout.¹⁶

shaken, cf. *De Fide* II, 139 (PL 16, 496): ut ibi primum fides Romano imperio frangeretur, ubi fracta est Deo. Elsewhere he reminds Theodosius that it is Christ who has given him his empire. Recalling the words of St. Paul (I Cor. 12:22), he remarks: Ergo quia omnes necessarii sunt, tuere omne corpus Domini Jesu; ut ipse quoque regnum tuum coelesti sua dignatione custodiat, *Epistle* 41, 26 (*ibid.* 963). cf. also, M. S. Kaniecka, *Vita S. Ambrosii Mediolanensis Episcopi a Paulino eius Notario ad Beatum Augustinum Conscripta*. CUAPS 16 (Washington, D. C., 1928), 65.

¹⁴ Cf. *De Obitu Theodosii Oratio* 48 (PL 16, 1211): "Helen has done wisely who has placed the cross on the head of sovereigns . . . Therefore, honorable is the nail of the Roman empire which rules the whole world and adorns the forehead of princes, in order that they might be preachers, who were accustomed to be persecutors." Tr. M. D. Mannix, *Sancti Ambrosii Oratio De Obitu Theodosii*. CUAPS 9 (Washington, D. C., 1925), 80.

¹⁵ Concerning the consequent penance of Theodosius, cf. H. Koch, "Die Kirchenbusse des Kaisers Theodosius des Grossen in Geschichte und Legende," *Historisches Jahrbuch* 28 (1907), 257-77; C. Baur, "Zur Ambrosius-Theodosius Frage," *Theologische Quartalschrift* 90 (Tübingen, 1908), 401-09.

¹⁶ *Epistle* 51, 14 (PL 16, 1000): Multifarie Deus noster admonet signis

St. Ambrose combined with his love of all things Roman an acute perception of the rights of God¹⁷ and His Church. This was a period during which the Church struggled against all attempts at identification of herself with the empire.¹⁸ For the unity which the emperors from Trajan on had failed to achieve by the triumph of a reformed paganism, the Christian emperors, Constantine, and in Ambrose's own day,¹⁹ Gratian (375-383), Valentinian II (375-392), and Theodosius the Great (379-395), sought to accomplish by the triumph of a one and orthodox Christianity, but subservient to the State. Thus during the time he ruled the See of Milan (374-397) Ambrose had constantly to remind these civil rulers that in ecclesiastical matters the Church alone had final jurisdiction.²⁰ His religious policy as regards the State had a threefold object in view. First, to protect the Church against all violence on the part of the State. Second, to reaffirm the Church as the guardian of the moral law. And third, to bring a close union between Church and State of such a kind that, far from placing the different religious sects on the same level, the State should unfailingly show its special favor to the Catholic Religion and discourage all others.

coelestibus, prophetarum praecepta: visionibus etiam peccatorum vult nos intelligere; quo rogemus eum, ut perturbationes auferat, pacem vobis, imperantibus servet, fides Ecclesiae et tranquillitas perseveret, cui prodest christianos et pios esse imperatores.

¹⁷ Cf. *De Abraham* I 2, 9 (CSEL 32, Sch. 509): deum praeferre debemus omnibus, nec patriae contuitus . . . nos reuocare debet ab executione praeceptorum caelestium; *Epistle* 57, 1 (PL 16, 1010). cf. also, J. R. Palanque, *Saint Ambroise et l'Empire Romain* (Paris, 1933), 325 ff.; P. de Labriolle, *Latin Christianity*. Tr. Herbert Wilson (London, 1924), 265.

¹⁸ On this point, cf. H. A. Rommen, *The State in Catholic Thought* (St. Louis, London, 1945), 518 ff.; C. N. Cochrane, *Christianity and Classical Culture. A Study of Thought and Action from Augustus to Augustine* (Oxford, 1940), 347 ff.

¹⁹ Cf. L. Sturzo, *Church and State* (N. Y., 1936), 36. For a succinct but illuminating treatment of the Church during this period, cf. Amann, *The Church of the Early Centuries*. Tr. E. Raybould (London, St. Louis, 1930), 117-32.

²⁰ Cf. *Epistle* 40, 27 (PL 16, 954); *Epistle* 21, 4 (*ibid.* 860-61); *Ibid.* 10 (*ibid.* 809-810); *Epistle* 40, 28 (*ibid.* 954); *Epistle* 57, 8 (*ibid.* 1011). cf. also, Palanque, *op. cit.*, 370 ff.

Using the principle that "the emperor is within the Church, the good emperor seeks the aid of the Church, he does not resist it,"²¹ Ambrose points out in this Epistle to Theodosius that:

It is neither kingly to deny freedom of speech, nor priestly not to say what one thinks. For there is nothing so democratic and lovable in you emperors as to esteem freedom even in those who have been subject to you by military service. Indeed, this is the difference between good and bad emperors: that the good love freedom, the bad slavery. Again, there is nothing in a priest so full of peril as regards God, so base in the opinion of men, than that one should not boldly declare what he thinks . . . Therefore I am not an officious meddler in things outside my province; I do not intrude in matters which are not my concern; but I am obliged to do my duty, and I obey the commands of God. . . . In God's cause whom will you hear, if not the priest. . . . Who will dare tell you the truth, if the priest does not?²²

Besides asserting the Church's independence²³ and enforcing her right of indirect authority in matters not specifically reli-

²¹ *Sermo Contra Auxentium* 36 (PL 16, 873): Imperator enim intra Ecclesiam est; bonus enim imperator quaerit auxilium Ecclesiae, non refutat.

²² *Epistle* 40, 2-4 (*ibid.* 946-7): neque imperiale est libertatem dicendi denegare, neque sacerdotale, quod sentias, non dicere. Nihil enim in vobis imperatoribus tam populare et tam amabile est, quam libertatem etiam in iis diligere, qui obsequio militiae vobis subditi sunt. Siquidem hoc interest inter bonos et malos principes, quod boni libertatem amant, servitutem improbi. Nihil etiam in sacerdote tam periculosum apud Deum, tam turpe apud homines, quam quod sentiat, non libere denuntiare. . . . Non ergo importunus indebitis me intersero, alienis ingero: sed debitis obtempero, mandatis Dei nostri obedio . . . in causa vero Dei quem audies, si sacerdotem non audias . . . Quis tibi verum audebit dicere, si sacerdos non audeat?

²³ Cf. F. Cayré, *Manuel of Patrology and History of Theology*, I. Tr. H. Howitt (Tournai, 1936), 536 ff.

gious,²⁴ Ambrose was also occupied with the task of vanquishing the remains of paganism,²⁵ and refuting the pernicious teachings of the schismatics and heretics, among whom he includes the Jews.²⁶ The futility of their attempts to weaken the faith of the true believers is derided by Ambrose with the remark that:

Whom God has joined to His Son persecution may not separate, nor luxury turn away, nor philosophy ravage, nor Manichaeus corrupt, nor Arius alienate, nor Sabellius infect. God has joined them together, the Jews may not separate them. They are all adulterers who seek to adulterate the truth of faith and wisdom.²⁷

In this regard the episode related at the beginning of this *Introduction* is important because it brings to light his animosity toward one particular type of enemy of Christianity, the Jews.²⁸

²⁴ Cf. *Sermo Contra Auxentium* 36 (PL 16, 1018): Imperator enim intra Ecclesiam non supra Ecclesiam est, concerning which Cayré, *op. cit.*, 537, remarks: "Ambrose's whole idea may be summed up in that famous expression which should be taken as applying to the religious and moral order in which it was conceived."

²⁵ Cf. *Epistle* 17 *passim* (PL 16, 823-29); *De Iacob* II, 7, 33 (CSEL 32, Sch. 51); *Exameron* IV 9, 34 (CSEL 32, Sch. 139-40). Under Theodosius began the formal liquidation of paganism. cf., G. Boissier, *La Fin du Paganisme*, 6 ed. vol. 2 (Paris, 1909), 231-91; Palanque, *op. cit.*, 115-21, 129 ff.; Cochrane, *op. cit.*, 329; Dudden, *op. cit.*, 1, 241-69.

²⁶ Cf. *Expos. euang. Lucam* VIII, 13 (CSEL 32, Sch. 397): isti [haeretici] enim non aliud quam fratres sunt Iudaeorum, quibus perfidiae nectuntur; *Ibid.* IX, 34 (*ibid.* 451); *Expos. Ps.* 118. 5. 7 (CSEL 62, Pet. 86); *De Instit. Virg.* 14, 92 (PL 16, 269).

²⁷ *Expos. euang. Lucam* VIII, 9 (CSEL 32, Sch. 395): quam deus traxit ad filium non separet persecutio, non auertat luxuria, non philosophia depraedetur, non Manichaeus contaminet, non Arrianus auertat, non Sabellianus inficiat. deus iunxit, Iudaeus non separet. adulteri sunt omnes qui adulterare cupiunt fidei et sapientiae ueritatem; cf. *Ibid.* V, 70 (*ibid.* 209).

²⁸ Ambrose's discrimination against the Jews, along with that of the other Fathers of the Church, was based on the fact that they had refused to accept the True Faith and had crucified their Saviour, cf. Juster, *Les Juifs dans l'Empire Romain* I (Paris, 1914), 48, n. 22. Palanque, *op. cit.*, 365, n. 58, says: "On peut remarquer que la question juive n'a jamais été posée

Ambrose was exasperated by their insistent irrationality,²⁹ their inexcusable blindness,³⁰ and their insincerity. For example, he states: "You hear a Jew praising the discipline of the Church and extolling her true grace, honoring the priests of the Church. Should you exhort him to believe, he refuses. Thus what he praises in us, he does not himself follow. Therefore his praise is hollow."³¹ And although he taught that among all the innumerable religious sects flourishing at the time,³² Arianism was

par Ambroise . . . jamais il n'a demandé l'interdiction du culte juif . . . Il semble que le peuple juif qui, dans l'Empire chrétien, comme naguère dans l'Empire païen, était l'objet d'un régime de faveur, doive, aux yeux d'Ambroise, continuer à jouir d'une tolérance exceptionnelle jusqu'à la conversion d'Israël, promise pour les derniers temps." That his discrimination against them was not racial is evident from Ambrose's commentary on a passage from Genesis (45:16 ff.) that Pharaoh rejoiced when Joseph was reunited to his family, *De Ioseph* 13, 74 (CSEL 32, Sch. 117): unde haec humanitas barbaro, nisi illud ostenderetur magnum mysterium, quod iam non invidet ecclesia, cum redimuntur Iudaei, et populus christianus hac adiunctione laetetur. The final salvation of the Jews is typified through the sudden friendship of Pilate and Herod, which signified according to Ambrose: quod per domini passionem utriusque sit futura concordia, ita tamen ut pius populus nationum capiat dei uerbum et ad populum Iudaeorum fidei suae deuotione transmittat, ut illi quoque gloria maiestatis suae corpus uestiant Christi, quem ante despexerant, *Expos. euang. Lucam* X, 103 (CSEL 32, Sch. 494).

²⁹ Cf. *Ibid.* I, 41 (*ibid.* 36): nonne tibi uidetur huic similis esse populus Iudaeorum ita irrationabilis, et actuum suorum non possit praestare rationem? It is well to note that in contradictory fashion the Jews denied that they were bound by the Roman Law, yet demanded that they be avenged and protected by it; cf. *Epistle* 40, 21 (PL 16, 952); Et cum ipsi Romanis legibus teneri se negent, ita ut crimina legis putent; nunc velut Romanis legibus se vindicandos putant. cf. also, A. Vincent, *Judaism*. Tr. by James Scanlan. (St. Louis, 1934), 28-35.

³⁰ Cf. *De Interpell. Iob et David* I, 5, 13 (CSEL 32, Sch. 218): sed non excusantur quia nesciunt, cum scire nolint quod debuerunt cognoscere. certe non illis inuidemus, domini si sententiam sequantur.

³¹ *Epistle* 41, 10 (PL 16, 958): Audis laudantem Iudaeum Ecclesiae disciplinam, ejusque veram gratiam praedicantem, honorantem sacerdotes Ecclesiae, hortaris ut credat, renuit; ita quod in nobis laudat, ipse non sequitur. Non ergo plena laudatio est.

³² Cf. *De Incarn. Dom. Sacramento* 35 (*ibid.* 711): Dies me citius defecerit, quam nomina haeticorum diversarumque sectarum; *De Fide* I, 44 (*ibid.* 452): Haeresis enim velut quaedam Hydra fabularum, vulneribus suis crevit: et dum saepe reciditur, pullulavit.

more detestable than Judaism,³³ he considered that the Jews, whom he designates as "mad ones,"³⁴ were much more dangerous.³⁵

With this in mind, it becomes evident that Ambrose's concern that the emperor follow his view as regards the solution of the affair at Callinicum had a higher motive than the preservation of the Church's prestige. For in this particular case, the maintenance of civil law was secondary to the safeguarding of Christianity itself.³⁶ Thus in order to uphold the rights of the Church, he limited the toleration which was to be afforded a false religion by asserting that the privileges which the possession of truth exacted for Christianity were above those that error could demand.³⁷

Moreover, it would seem that Ambrose was apprehensive lest the acknowledgement of this synagogue's claim would encourage the Jews to seek further favors, and eventually, usurp even the place of the Church in the empire. Perhaps he was mindful of Sara's trouble with Agar which culminated in God's command to Abraham (Gen. 21:10) to cast out the bondwoman and her son, "so that her bondservant might not become insolent in her bodily offspring and claim for herself the right of the Church,"³⁸ when in this Epistle he sees the Church as that woman (Lk. 7:47) who anointed Christ in the house of Simon. For he remarks that:

³³ Cf. *Sermo Contra Auxentium* 31 (*ibid.* 872): Et tamen videte quanto peiores Ariani sint, quam Iudaei; *De Fide* III, 38 (*ibid.* 503); *De Spiritu* III, 131 (*ibid.* 692).

³⁴ Cf. *Expos. euang. Lucam* II, 49 (CSEL 32, Sch. 68): o amentes Iudaei, uenisse non creditis quem uidetis, uenisse non creditis quam dicitis esse uenturum!

³⁵ Cf. *Expos. Ps.* 118. 13. 6 (CSEL 62, Pet. 284): Quos igitur habet inimicos nisi haereticos? ipsi enim sunt in pugnatore fidei, ueritatis inimici. quos nisi Iudaeos? ipsi enim grauiore inimici qui ex amicis inimici facti sunt.

³⁶ Cf. *Epistle* 40, 11 (PL 16, 949): Sed disciplinae te ratio, imperator, movet. Quid igitur est amplius? disciplinae species, an causa religionis? Cedat oportet censura devotioni.

³⁷ Cf. Cayré, *op. cit.*, 537, n. 5.

³⁸ *De Abraham* II, 10, 72 (CSEL 32, Sch. 626): itaque ne insolens partu corporeo fiat ancilla eius et ius sibi ecclesiae uindictet.

This is the woman who entered the house of the Pharisee and cast out the Jew, but acquired Christ. For the Church excluded the Synagogue. Why is it again attempted that . . . the Synagogue should exclude the Church from the bosom of faith, from the House of Christ?³⁹

That such was the real cause for the seeming injustice⁴⁰ of this letter is confirmed by the constant references Ambrose makes in his writings to the "conflict" between the Synagogue and the Church. Convinced that the temporal position of the Synagogue, now an historical anomaly, furnished it with a weapon capable of inflicting great harm on the Church, he intimates that even the recognition of Judaism's smallest claim would, in the eyes of the people, cast a shadow of doubt on the Church's teaching that She alone was the normal flowering of the revelation of the Old Testament; that the Jewish religion having become unfaithful had been abandoned by God in favor of this Church gathered from the nations (*ecclesiae ex gentibus congregatae*).

As a student of biblical tradition Ambrose could not deny the providential status of the Jewish people during Old Testament times.⁴¹ The solution to the difficulty of setting forth the relation between the ancient position of the Jews and the entirely new position of the Christian Church became possible for him through an allegorico-mystical interpretation of the Old Testa-

³⁹ *Epistle* 40, 24 (PL 16, 953): Haec est mulier quae in domum Pharisaei intravit, et ejecit Judaeum, Christum autem acquisivit. Ecclesia enim Synagogam excludit: cur iterum tentatur, ut . . . de pectore fidei, de domo Christi Synagoga excludat Ecclesiam?

⁴⁰ Cf. Dudden, *op. cit.*, 2, 376. He remarks that this Epistle shows "how religious prejudice could so warp the judgment of a good and wise man as to cause him to condone the crimes of robbery and arson, and actually plead the unpunished outrages of brutal mobs and heathen persecutors as precedents for pardoning fanatical Christian criminals." The attitude of this letter may be considered from different points of view, for examples, see L. Baunard, *Histoire de Saint Ambroise*, 2 ed. (Paris, 1872), 412; Kaniecka, *op. cit.*, 63-65.

⁴¹ Ambrose refers to it as a venerable religion: *religionis uenerabilis*, *Expos. euang. Lucam* I, 16 (CSEL 32, Sch. 20).

ment in the light of the New Testament writings, especially the Pauline Epistles. In this way, while admitting the literal sense, which according to him was the only sense the Jews accepted,⁴² he utilized a certain deeper or higher sense to which most of his attention was devoted. The slightest external detail, circumstances apparently the most insignificant in a biblical event, were transformed and made to offer profound and invaluable assistance in his exposition of the pre-eminent position of the Church.

This manner of understanding the Sacred Texts according to their various possible meanings, that is, under the heading of natural truths, the mysteries of faith, and moral precepts,⁴³ was the result of his use of the works of Philo, Origen, St. Hippolytus of Rome, and Basil the Great.⁴⁴ The mastery of this system enabled him to plunge into the sea of Holy Scriptures, which, as he wrote to a certain Constantius, "has in itself deep meanings and the depth of prophetic riddles,"⁴⁵ and emerge therefrom with indisputable proof of the predestination of the Church over the Synagogue. Well, then, did St. Augustine rejoice because his learned teacher was accustomed to reiterate in his instructions that (2 Cor. 3:6): "The letter kills, but the spirit gives life."⁴⁶ For in these few words was contained the norm by which he interpreted sacred texts as applicable to the Church and the Synagogue.

⁴² Cf. *Explan. Ps.* 43, 57 (CSEL 64, Pet. 301): Ille Judaeorum . . . ipse est secundum carnem natus, quia secundum carnem interpretatus est scripturam diuinam et secundum litteram, non secundum spiritum; *De Noe* 10, 33-34 (CSEL 32, Sch. 437): haec secundum simplicem lectionis expositionem. altiora autem et profundior interpretatio illud adtexit.

⁴³ Cf. *De Isaac uel anima* 4, 20-25 (CSEL 32, Sch. 655-58); *Explan. Ps.* 36, 1 (CSEL 64, Pet. 70): omnis scriptura diuina uel naturalis uel mystica uel moralis est.

⁴⁴ Cf. R. H. Malden, "St. Ambrose as an Interpreter of Sacred Scripture," in *Journal of Theological Studies* 16 (1915), 513, ff., 518-22; O. Bardenhewer, *Patrology, The Lives and Works of the Fathers of the Church*. Tr. Thomas J. Shahan (Freiburg im Breisgau, St. Louis, 1908), 436.

⁴⁵ *Epistle* 2, 3 (PL 16, 755): Mare est Scriptura divina, habens in se sensus profundos, et altitudinem propheticorum aenigmatum.

⁴⁶ Cf. St. Augustine, *Confessionum Libri* VI, 4 (PL 32, 722).

To evaluate the Ambrosian conception of the Church and the Synagogue as regards the True Faith, the first chapter of this dissertation will provide a background and setting for a more complete understanding of what has been referred to as the "conflict" between Judaism⁴⁷ and Christianity by investigating what St. Ambrose taught concerning the intimate relation existing between the Christian Church and the Patriarchal Church. The next chapter will consider the question of Abraham's inheritance of "a great nation" as regards his carnal and spiritual decedents. The third chapter will deal with God's abandonment of the Chosen people and His acceptance, in their stead, of a Church gathered from the "despised" nations. Pursuing this theme further, as expressed by St. Ambrose in his concept of Christ as the husband of two wives, the Synagogue and the Church, the fourth chapter will furnish evidence that the Divine Bridegroom espoused the Church in the Christian era. The concluding pages will discuss his theory on the salvation of the Jews through the Church.

⁴⁷ The use of the terms "Synagogue" and "Judaism", as opposed to the Christian Church and Christianity, distinguishes that part of religion founded in Moses which fell away from the True Faith.

CHAPTER THREE

The Abandonment of the Synagogue and the Establishment of the Church

The burden of this chapter is to investigate the arguments St. Ambrose used to prove that the Church founded by Christ superseded the Old Testament religion of the Jews in the realm of the True Faith. In substantiation of which it is expedient to demonstrate the manner in which God put an end to the transitory observances of the Synagogue and established in its place a religious society gathered from the despised nation.¹ Ambrose remarks in one place that God took His revenge on the Jews by seeking his Church from the reverse of the chosen people, preferring a foolish people to an ancient and regal one.² While elsewhere he sees in the story of the Ethiopian eunuch,³ Abdemelech (Jerem. 38: 1 ff.), drawing the prophet Jeremias out of the dungeon wherein the Jews had cast him,

¹ St. Ambrose does not spare these nations when treating of the origin of the Christian Church. Thus in his *De Spiritu* II, 109 (PL 16, 655), he remarks: *Eramus ergo ferae . . . Sed per Spiritum sanctum jam leonum saevitia, pardorum varietas, astutia vulpium, luporum rapacitas de nostris exolevit affectibus. Magna igitur gratia, quae coelo terras mutavit . . . quia ante sicut ferae errabamus in silvis.* Elsewhere he states that the nations were *pusillum asinae*, cf. *De Cain et Abel* II, 3, 11 (CSEL 32, Sch. 387); *De Patriarchis* 4, 23 (CSEL 32, Sch. 137); and *camelum*, cf. *De Abraham* I, 9, 93 (CSEL 32, Sch. 563).

² Cf. *Explan. Ps.* 36, 7 (CSEL 64, Pet. 75): *uerum est ergo quod scriptum est, quia ultus est deus propriam contumeliam ecclesiam sibi ex non gente quaerendo et eam ex gente insipiente uetusto illi atque regali populo praeferendo.*

³ Cf. *De Paradiso* 3, 16 (CSEL 32, Sch. 276): *Aethiopia enim abiecta et uilis Latina interpretatione signatur.*

a very beautiful figure, because we,—namely, sinners from the nations, black beforehand by transgressions, and aforesometimes fruitless,—drew up from the depths the prophetic word which the Jews had cast, as it were, into the mire of their mind and flesh. And therefore, it was written (Ps. 67:32): “Ethiopia shall stretch out her hand to God.” In which is signified the appearance of the holy Church, who says in the Canticles (1:4): “I am black but beautiful, O ye daughters of Jerusalem.” Black through sin, beautiful through grace; black through condition, beautiful through redemption.⁴

In reply to one of his correspondents, St. Ambrose inquired whether he was ignorant of the fact that sometimes the Sacred Scriptures spoke in allegory, that is, at one time referring to the Synagogue, at another time to the Church?⁵ Even the Jews were aware of this state of affairs. In the past their constant complaint had been that they were looked upon as a riddle among the nations. For according to the versicle (Ps. 43:15): “Thou hast made us a byword among the gentiles, a shaking of the head among the people,” Ambrose reveals that these things

which happened to the Jews were done in similitude, that the destruction of the Jews might be for us a type and figure, and that from that similitude we might seek the solution for present happenings by means of a parable: in order that we might be on our guard because of their ex-

⁴ *De Spiritu* II, 112 (PL 16, 655): *figura pulcherrima est, quia sermonem propheticum, quem Judaei velut in coenum suae mentis carnisque detruserant, non videlicet ex gentibus peccatores, nigri ante delictis, et quondam infructuosi elevavimus de profundo. Et ideo scriptum est: Aethiopia praevallebit manus suas Deo. In quo sanctae Ecclesiae species significatur, quae ait in Canticis canticorum: Nigra sum et decora, filiae Hierusalem: nigra per culpam, decora per gratiam: nigra per conditionem, decora per redemptionem.*

⁵ Cf. *Epistle* 33, 2 (*ibid.* 92): *Verum ipse non ignoras quod interdum Scriptura cum allegoriam dicit, alia ad speciem Synagogae, alia ad Ecclesiae refert.*

ample. Further, all things Jewish are offered us in the likeness of parables, that is, figures requiring solution.⁶

For St. Ambrose, the adumbrations of the Old Testament are nowhere better evidenced than in their references to and his interpretations of those biblical passages which presage the *denouement* of the Synagogue and the establishment of the Church.

In several places he points out that the more complete meaning of the Old Testament was to be acquired only in the light of the Christian faith. It is in this sense that he states that Christ was the end of the Law or faith, that it was through Him that all of God's revelations are made understandable, "Who would open the Law and would reveal the Gospel."⁷ This is the manner in which he employed the scriptural text, (*Ibid.* 61:12): "God has spoken once, these two things I have heard," to illustrate the understanding of Holy Writ which the Church alone possesses. For he relates:

God has spoken once and many things have been heard, because He did not speak by means of letters and syllables . . . He spoke once in the Law . . . However, of late He has spoken through His Son . . . and those things have also been heard which before had not been heard by those to whom He had spoken through the prophets. Therefore He spoke once in the New Testament and the Old Testament, which had not been heard, has been heard: because the Lord Himself said of the Jewish people, (Mk. 4:12): "They will see and they will not see, and they will hear and they will not hear." They will hear with the corporeal

⁶ *Explan. Ps.* 43, 56 (CSEL 64, Pet. 300): quae acciderunt Iudaeis, in similitudinem (figura) facta sunt, ut fieret nobis typus et figura excidium Iudaeorum atque ex illa similitudine per parabolam solutionem praesentibus requiramus, quo exempla eorum cauere possimus; deinde, quia Iudaicae res omnes quasi parabolae sunt, hoc est quasi figurae egentes solutione.

⁷ *Ibid.* 47, 21 (*ibid.* 359): per quem fierent omnes docibiles dei, qui legem aperiret, euangelium reuelaret; cf. *De Fide* II, 32 (PL 16, 476); *Expos. Ps.* 118. 8. 16 (CSEL 62, Pet. 159); *Ibid.* 118. 8. 59 (*ibid.* 188); *Apologia David altera* 9, 45 (CSEL 32, Sch. 389).

ear, but they will not hear with the hearing of the mind. To us, therefore, that is, to the Church, He spoke once and two things have been heard; because we both heard and understood those things which they who read did not understand, which they who heard did not hear. For Christ alone opened the human ear for understanding the mysteries: He alone loosed the seal of the Book and solved the enigmas of the prophets.⁸

A. THE ECCLESIA EX GENTIBUS CONGREGATA

Before entering into the main body of this discussion, a question of prime importance must be answered. Here it is to be ascertained whether the expression, *Ecclesia ex gentibus*, of which Ambrose makes frequent mention in his writings, is to be identified as the Christian Church. For example, what is the implication of his comparison of the Church to the Ethiopian woman (Numb. 12:1 ff.) whom Miriam, in the type of the Synagogue, did not recognize as the mystery of the Church from the nations: *Ecclesiae ex gentibus sacramentum ignorans*,⁹ or the mystery of the Church to be gathered from the nations as foreseen by Jacob in the defloration of Dina?¹⁰ And what is its meaning in

⁸ *Explan. Ps. 61, 33-34* (CSEL 64, Pet. 397): *semel locutus est deus et plura audita sunt, quia non per litteras et syllabas est locutus . . . semel locutus in lege est . . . nouissime autem locutus est in filio suo . . . et audita sunt etiam illa, quae ante audita non erant ab his quibus locutus fuerat per prophetas . . . semel ergo locutus est in nouo testamento et uetus auditum est testamentum quod non audiebatur, quia ipse dominus dixit de populo Iudaeorum: uidebunt et non uidebunt, audient et non audient. audient aure corporea, sed non audient mentis auditu. Nobis ergo, hoc est ecclesiae semel locutus est et duo audita sunt, quia et illa audiuius et intelleximus, quae non intellexerunt qui legerunt, non audierunt qui audierunt. solus enim Christus aurem aperuit humanam ad cognoscenda mysteria, solus libri signaculum soluit et resoluit aenigmata prophetarum.*

⁹ Cf. *Epistle 63, 57* (PL 16, 1035); *De Spiritu II, 112* (*ibid.* 655).

¹⁰ Cf. *De Iacob II, 7, 32* (CSEL 32, Sch. 50): *Denique non multo post reuelationem istiusmodi cum esset ab alienigenae filio Dina, Iacob filia, deflorato uirginitatis pudore temerata . . . Iacob autem, qui . . . mystico spiritu sacramentum congregandae ex gentibus praeuidebat ecclesiae . . .*

the typification of the non-Jewish bride of Booz, Ruth, "in whom preceded the figure of us all, who are gathered from the nations: *qui collecti ex gentibus sumus*, entering into the Church of the Lord"?¹¹

1. NOT A PURELY GENTILE CHURCH

It might possibly be contended that this peculiar title refers to the Gentile Christians alone, in the sense that Ambrose speaks of a Jewish as distinct from a Gentile Christianity. But nowhere in his writings is such a definite statement made. In fact, he tends to discount any intention of division in the Church which takes its existence from the gathering of all peoples. For commenting on the Gospel narrative (Lk. 5:6 ff.) of how John and James came to Peter's bark, Ambrose remarks that "these from the Synagogue, therefore, came to the ship of Peter, that is, gathered at the Church, that they might fill both ships. For all, whether Jew or Greek, bend their knee in the name of Jesus."¹²

On the other hand, the closest he comes to this notion of two distinct religious foundations is when he notes that Christ first called the Jews, in the person of the apostles, and then turned to the nations. "Lastly, all are invited into the Church, both the people of the Synagogue and the people of the nations. But first those of the Synagogue, because from the Jews the apostles first believed, through whom afterwards the peoples of the nations were gathered."¹³ Thus explaining the Psalm verse (43:12):

¹¹ *Expos. euang. Lucam* III, 30 (CSEL 32, Sch. 121): in illa nostrum omnium, qui collecti ex gentibus sumus ingrediendi in ecclesiam domini, figura praecessit.

¹² *Ibid.* IV, 77 (*ibid.* 177): hi igitur de synagoga ad nauem Petri, hoc est ad ecclesiam conuenerunt, ut inplerent ambas nauculas; omnes enim in nomine Iesu genu flectunt, siue Iudaeus siue Graecus. cf. *Ibid.* VII, 178 (*ibid.* 360); *De Spiritu* II, 110 (PL 16, 655).

¹³ *Expos. Ps.* 118. 12. 24 (CSEL 62, Pet. 265): postremo omnes inuitantur ad ecclesiam, et synagogae populus et gentilium, sed prius synagogae, quia priores ex Iudaeis apostoli crediderunt, per ipsos postea nationum populi congregati sunt.

"Thou hast scattered us among the nations," Ambrose remarks that just as Christ in the likeness of a seed fell on the earth and died that He might bear much fruit; so He dispersed His apostles that they might bear good seed among the nations. And he adds: "As seeds, the holy apostles were sent to the separated and dispersed peoples, that in the field of the Church the gathered nations might shine over the whole world with diversified fruits."¹⁴

It is in this manner that the Church herself is identified with the gathering of the nations. For elsewhere, in his commentary on the Gospel statement (Mt. 11:12): "From the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven has been enduring violent assault, and the violent have been seizing it by force," he relates that:

John had preceded, in order that he might justify the Jewish people. The Lord Himself had come to the lost sheep of the House of Israel. He had sent the apostles that they might establish the faith of the Jewish people either by disputations, or by signs and miracles. But since they refused the gifts offered to them, the publican and sinners began to believe in God and to join the faith. Therefore in these the kingdom of heaven is seized by apostolic preaching and is solidified by the aspirations of a faithful people.¹⁵

However, all this was but another instance of God's temporary abandonment of the chosen people. For it is to be understood that He never totally deserted them. As St. Ambrose demonstrates apropos of his interpretation of the biblical passage con-

¹⁴ *Explan. Ps.* 43, 39 (CSEL 64, Pet. 289-90): quasi semina apostoli sancti missi sunt per diuersa atque dispersi, ut in agrum ecclesiae gentes congregatae diuersis fructibus refulgerent toto orbe terrarum.

¹⁵ *Expos. euang. Lucam* V, 112 (CSEL 32, Sch. 229): praecesserat Iohannes, ut iustificaret populum Iudaeorum, ipse dominus uenerat ad oues perditas domus Israel, apostolos destinauerat, ut fidem populi Iudaeorum uel disputatione uel signis miraculisque fundarent, sed cum illi munera sibi oblata defugerent, publicani et peccatores in deum credere, in fidem coierunt. in his igitur apostolica praedicatione regnum caelorum cogitur et fidelis populi adspiratione solidatur. cf. *Ibid.* V, 115 (*ibid.* 230).

governing the sick daughter (Lk. 8: 41) of Jairus, in the type of the Synagogue, "who was close to death because she was deserted by Christ. Whom do we think this leader of the Synagogue is, unless the Law, in the contemplation of which the Lord did not completely abandon the Synagogue, but preserved the medicine of salvation to those believing."¹⁶

2. THE YOUNGER PEOPLE

Although Ambrose does specify that the Church gathered from the nations did include Jews among her members,¹⁷ it is to be acknowledged that there was a distinct departure of Christianity from all things Jewish. Even though his allegorical application of the frequent biblical references to the consanguinity of the two religious bodies, as expressed in Cain and Abel, Esau and Jacob, Manasses and Ephraim, in which the providential continuity of the True Religion is rooted, served to show that the Jews and the Christians were a fraternal people,¹⁸ there the similarity ended.

For example, St. Ambrose uses the peculiar circumstances of the birth of the twin sons of Tamar to show the existence of two principal religious observances, one of which flourishes under the light of grace, the other under the Law. Thus Ambrose notes that according to the biblical narrative, (Gen. 38:27-31): "In the very delivery of the infants, one put forth a hand, where-

¹⁶ *Ibid.* VI, 54 (*ibid.* 253-4): quae urgebatur in mortem, quia deserabatur a Christo, quem putamus synagogae principem esse nisi legem, cuius contemplatione dominus synagogam non penitus dereliquit, medicinam salutis credentibus reseruavit? cf. *Ibid.* VI, 64 (*ibid.* 258).

¹⁷ Cf. *Expos. Ps.* 118. 5. 12 (CSEL 62, Pet. 88): Constitue mihi aliquos ex circumcisione credentes in lege doctos obseruantiae sollicitiae uiros et nunc euangelii agnitione inluminatos, spiritali, saginatos gratia; dicit in his ecclesia, quae uidet Christum, quae cibo eius pascitur (Cant. 2:3): *in umbra eius concupiui et sedi et fructus eius dulcis in faucibus meis.*

¹⁸ Cf. *Apologia prophetae David* 4, 18 (CSEL 32, Sch. 310): quod sacerdotalis ille populus patrum fraterno populo posterioribus temporibus derogauit.

on the midwife tied a scarlet thread, saying: This shall come forth first. But he drawing back his hand, the other came forth: and the woman said: Why is the partition divided for thee? and therefore she called his name Phares. Afterwards his brother came out, on whose hand was the scarlet thread: and she called him Zara." Attending to the *quasi* birth of Zara, the putting forth of his hand, St. Ambrose contends that grace and faith antedated the Law and the letter and were operative from the beginning. Further, the putting forth of his hand and Zara's actual birth are a type of the bond which unites the religious service of those who existed before the Law with that of the Church. While Phares, who prevented Zara from being born first, represents the obstruction to the true religious service which the literal interpretation of the Law accomplished. Thus the story of the birth of these two brothers reveals, according to St. Ambrose, not only the history of the True Religion, but also the disparity which exists between the Synagogue and the Church.¹⁹

¹⁹ Cf. *Expos. euang. Lucam* III, 21, 22, 24, 26, 28 (CSEL 32, Sch. 113-119): Cur autem alter manum praemisit ex utero, alter genitali praecessit exortu: nisi per geminorum mysterium gemina describitur uita populorum, una secundum legem, altera secundum fidem, una secundum litteram, altera secundum gratiam? prior gratia quam lex, prior fides quam littera. et ideo gratia typus manum ante praemisit, quia gratiae actus ante praecessit, qui fuit in Iob Melchisedech Abraham Isaac Iacob, qui per fidem sine lege uiuebant . . . praeuenientes enim legem patriarchae sanctae praescriptorum uinculis absoluti libera et consimili nobis euangelii gratia refulserunt . . . iunior horum frater secundum ordo pietatis; primus enim in patriarchis, secundum in regibus et sacerdotibus est . . . prior enim Zara qui interpretatione significatur oriens; lux enim pietatis ueri splendor orientis est, illius utique qui dixit: *oriens nomen est mihi*, cuius in patriarchis primitus radius lucis inluxit. hi enim primi uitae suae actum in hoc saeculo praemiserunt, in quorum manu nostri quoque actus tamquam plenioris corporis, qui adhuc naturae quodam generantis utero tenebamur, figura praecessit. sed media tamquam saepis obiecta legis est observatio et quodammodo uita maiorum uidetur incisa . . . itaque posteaquam [Zara] manum reduxit, quasi incisione facta saepis exiuit frater eius, quem quasi medium parietem saepis uel maceriae apostolus nominauit atque ipse de incisione nomen accepit; Phares enim diuisio est. unde et Pharisei nuncupati . . . duo igitur gemini duae geminae uitae, duae geminae sunt militiae, ita ut prior melior sit sequente. et ideo quod est melius reformatum est.

Ambrose points out in a striking manner the ascendancy of the people of the nations over the Jews by adapting the several instances in the biblical narrative where the younger brother superseded the older brother in the privileges of the birthright.²⁰ This particular theory is clearly seen in his commentary on a passage from the Psalms (118:9): "By what does a young man correct his ways," in which he recounts that

that younger people from the gathering of the nations: *iuuenior ille ex congregatione gentium populus*, who before it believed in Christ strayed in tortuous wanderings, now corrects its ways because it guards the words of God, which the Jews did not guard, and therefore, could not find the way of salvation.²¹

Elsewhere he educes from the Lord's command (Mt. 18:3), to become like little children, that this is prophesied "concerning the people of the Church, who, younger, went before the older people of the Jews in the pursuit of virtue."²²

Thus in the case of Cain and Abel, Ambrose understands the passage (Gen. 4:2): "And she brought forth his brother Abel,"²³ as signifying

²⁰ The two sons of Abraham Ismael and Isaac, typify the struggle of the Synagogue and the Church over the inheritance of the True Faith. In this higher sense, Abraham becomes the father of two peoples: *unum Iudaeorum*, qui legis syllabis seruiat, eo quod de ancilla in seruitutem uideatur esse generatus, alterum Christianum, qui ad remissionem peccatorum caelestis gratiae libertatem acceperit. *De Abraham* I, 4, 28 (CSEL 32, Sch. 523): cf. *Explan. Ps.* 43, 57 (CSEL 64, Pet. 301).

²¹ *Expos. Ps.* 118. 2. 20 (CSEL 62, Pet. 31-32): quia iuuenior ille ex congregatione gentium populus, qui, antequam in Christo crederet, tortuoso errabat anfractu, in eo corrigit uiam suam, quia dei uerba custodiuit, quae noluit custodire populus Iudaeorum, et ideo ille uiam salutis inuenire non potuit.

²² *Expos. euang. Lucam* VIII, 59 (CSEL 32, Sch. 420): quod uidetur de ecclesia populo prophetatum. qui iuuenior seniore populum Iudaeorum uirtutis studiis anteiuit; cf. *Expos. Ps.* 118. 18. 22-27 (CSEL 62, Pet. 410-11).

²³ *De Cain et Abel* I, 1, 3 (CSEL 32, Sch. 339-340): et adiecit parere Abel. Concerning which Ambrose says that when something is added, the former is destroyed. Therefore according to the interpretation of his name, Cain was removed when Abel was added, see, *Ibid.*

The mystery of two peoples: that God by adding to His Church the faith of a holy people, removed the faithlessness of a lying people . . . In these two brothers, Cain and Abel, are prefigured the Synagogue and the Church. Through Cain is understood the parricidal people of the Jews who sought the Blood of their Lord and Author, and, as I might say, their Brother according to the Motherhood of the Virgin Mary. Through Abel is understood the Christian people adhering to God.²⁴

Moreover, the good deceit (*bona fraus, bona dolus*) practiced by Rebecca, so that Jacob would receive Isaac's blessing (*Ibid.* 27) instead of Esau, is more than a witness that even before the establishment of the Synagogue the predestination of the Church was forecast.²⁵ Here St. Ambrose remarks that in type of the Church Rebecca clothed Jacob, that is, the Christian people, with the garment of the Old Testament which the Jews had left in disuse.²⁶ In another place, commenting on the privilege of the firstborn, Ambrose sees foreshadowed in this narration the mystery of two peoples. Accordingly, he remarks that:

the Jewish people are the elder (*seniorem*) and the Christian people are the younger (*iunior*), who for a pottage

²⁴ *Ibid.* I, 2, 5 (*ibid.* 341): *Mysterium magis duorum populorum intelligo, quod deus adiciendo ecclesiae suae fidem piae plebis abstulit perfidiam populi praeuaricantis . . . haec figura synagogae et ecclesiae in istis duobus fratribus ante praecessit, Cain et Abel. per Cain parricidalis populus intelligitur Iudaeorum, qui domini et auctoris sui et secundum Mariae uirginis partum fratris, ut ita dicam, sanguinem persecutus est, per Abel autem intelligitur Christianus adhaerens deo.*

²⁵ Cf. *De Iacob* II, 3, 10 (CSEL 32, Sch. 37): *Celebrata benedictione postea frater senior aduenit. quo declaratur prius ecclesiae regnum quam synagogae in praedestinatione delatum, sed subintrasse synagogam.*

²⁶ Cf. *Ibid.* 9 (*ibid.* 36): *ideo iunior frater seniorem fratrem exiuit, quia fidei emicuit dignitate. hanc stolam ecclesiae typo Rebecca protulit et dedit filio iuniori stolam ueteris testamenti . . . et dedit populo Christiano, quia uti amictu sciret accepto, quoniam populus Iudaeorum eam sine usu habebat et proprios nesciebat ornatus; *Expos. Ps.* 118. 13. 15 (CSEL 62, Pet. 290-1).*

of lentils received the birthright of the older brother. The concept expressed in these words is that the older people, on account of the intemperance of their stomach, lost the birthright which it had possessed. However, the people of the Church by sobriety and moderation seized the birthright of the paternal blessing, which it had not possessed in the order of age, by means of confession and holy robbery. What is it, therefore, that the Christian people seized, unless the Lord Jesus?²⁷

For St. Ambrose, the same held true in the blessing (*Ibid.* 48:13 ff.) which Jacob extended to the sons of Joseph, Manasses and Ephraim. While Joseph attempted to preserve the order of age, so that the older brother would receive the greater blessing, Ephraim,

the younger one, in type of the younger people who believed, was preferred. . . . Moreover, Ephraim is promised, by the interpretation of his name, that is, "who made the father increase," the fecundity of faith . . . which is the characteristic of the younger people which is the Body of Christ—causing the Father to increase, and not abandoning their God.²⁸

In the New Testament Ambrose sees this duality exemplified

²⁷ *Ibid.* 118. 20. 6 (*ibid.* 448): nonne apertum est mysterium duos significari populos, hoc est populum Iudaeorum seniore et christianum populum iuveniore, qui propter cocturam lentis primatus fratris senioris accepit? quo indicio euidenter exprimitur, quod populus senior ille terrenus propter intemperantiam gulae primatus quos habebat amisit, populus autem ecclesiae per sobrietatem et continentiam primatus, quos ordine non habebat aetatis, et confessione et pio furto paternae benedictionis eripuit. quid est igitur quod populus rapuit christianus nisi dominum Iesum?

²⁸ *De Patriarchis* I, 2, 3-4 (CSEL 32, Sch. 126-7): minorem filium in typo iunioris populi credidit praeferendum . . . Ephraem autem fecunditatem fidei interpretatione nominis pollicetur, qui auxit patrem . . . quod est proprium populi iunioris, qui corpus est Christi augens patrem et deum proprium non relinquens; cf. *Expos. Ps.* 118. 14. 32 (CSEL 62, Pet. 319).

in the parable of the prodigal son;²⁹ the narrative concerning the widow and her dead son;³⁰ and in the words of the dying Saviour committing His Mother to the filial charge of the apostle John. This last, while indicating the designation of the Church as the last age of the True Religion,³¹ brings to the foreground the *leitmotiv* which St. Ambrose associates with this concept of fraternity, namely, that with the acceptance of the Christian people, Judaism is rejected. In a statement reminiscent of what he said concerning Cain and Abel, Ambrose points out that:

It is a mystery that she [Mary] was commended to John, youngest among the others . . . This is a mystery of the Church which before had been joined to the older people for the sake of appearance, but not in intimacy; afterwards She begot the Word and by the faith of the Cross and the burial of the Lord's Body She planted It in the bodies and the minds of men, and from the precept of God She chose the society of a younger people.³²

²⁹ Cf. *Expos. euang. Lucam* VII, 239 (CSEL 32, Sch. 388): Nec inuidemus si qui duos fratres istos uelit referre ad populos duos, ut sit adulescentior populus ex gentibus tamquam Israhel, cui frater maior beneficium paternae benedictionis inuidit.

³⁰ Cf. *Ibid.* V, 89 (*ibid.* 217): eo quod sancta ecclesia populum iuniorem a pompa funeris atque supremis sepulcri suarum reuocet ad uitam.

³¹ Cf. *Epistle* 44, 12 (PL 16, 980): octava autem unam et perpetuam aetatem inuehit, quae excrescit in virum perfectum, in agnitione Dei, fide plenitudine, in qua legitimae aetatis mensura impletur. The eighth age began with the Incarnation and will end with the day of Judgment. cf. *De Abraham* II, 9, 66 (CSEL 32, Sch. 621-2); *De Spiritu* II, 119 (PL 16, 656).

³² *Expos. euang. Lucam* X, 134 (CSEL 32, Sch. 506): mysterium tamen est quod commendatur Iohanni inter ceteros iuniori . . . ecclesiae hic esse mysterium, quae populo seniori specie ante copulata, non usu, postea quae peperit uerbum et in corporibus ac mentibus hominum per fidem crucis et sepulturam dominici corporis seminavit, ex praecepto dei societatem populi iunioris elegit.

3. IT IS THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

In the final analysis, the *Ecclesia ex gentibus congregata* is the *Ecclesia Christianorum*.³³ An investigation of his writings confirms this. For in the first place, the gathering of the peoples from the nations has the force of that decree which God issued when He commanded (Gen. 1:9) the waters to be gathered together in one place at the time of creation:

At one time the water gathered from every valley, marsh and lake. The valley is heresy, the valley is paganism . . . Therefore, from every valley there has been gathered a Catholic people. Now there are not many gatherings, but one gathering, one Church. Thus it was said: "Let the water be gathered from every valley," and there was made a spiritual gathering, there was made one people.³⁴

In the second place, while St. Ambrose does speak of the apostles as instruments for the propagation of the True Faith after the Crucifixion,³⁵ it is Christ alone Who built the Church,³⁶

³³ *Explan. Ps. 37, 17* (CSEL 64, Pet. 149). The terms "nation" and "Christian" are synonymous in many parts of his writing. As Ambrose points out, cf. *Expos. Ps. 118. 6. 3* (CSEL 62, Pet. 110): *longe erat Christus a nobis, longe erat a nationibus*.

³⁴ *Exameron III, 1, 2-3* (CSEL 32, Sch. 60): *Congregata est hic quondam aqua ex omni ualle, ex omni palude, ex omni lacu. uallis est haeresis, uallis est gentilitas . . . ex omni igitur ualle congregatus est populus catholicus. iam non multae congregationes sunt, sed una est congregatio, una ecclesia. dictum est et hic: congregetur aquam ex omni ualle, et facta est congregatio spiritalis, facta est unus populus*.

³⁵ Cf. *Expos. euang. Lucam VI, 107* (CSEL 32, Sch. 280): *prohibentur ergo apostoli euangelizare eum dei filium, ut euangelizarent postea crucifixum*; *De Abraham II, 10, 71* (CSEL 32, Sch. 625); *De Spiritu II, 9* (PL 16, 636).

³⁶ Cf. *Explan. Ps. 47, 17* (CSEL 64, Pet. 357): *ipse (Deus) ecclesiam suam fundauit et propagauit in aeternum, quoniam uere ipse cum filio suo unigenito hanc gratiam plebi suae contulit, quem aedificatorem etiam demonstraui*. This is by way of appropriation, since the Trinity called the Church. cf. *De Spiritu II, 202 ff.* (PL 16, 553-4); *Ibid. II, 110-11* (*ibid.* 655); *Ibid. II, 25* (*ibid.* 638).

Who called and gathered³⁷ the Church from the nations. The following are several examples of Ambrose's teaching on this subject:

We notice, therefore, that on account of the gathering of the people He would take the form of a slave.³⁸

There is one Christ Whose reign has no end. Further, Solomon did not rule any nations, Christ truly gathered the Church from the nations.³⁹

For just as the bull leads the herd, so Christ leads the people of the nations to the Church. He brings them to a place of pasture.⁴⁰

Fittingly, therefore, did St. Matthew, about to call the nations to the Church through the Gospel, remember that the Lord Himself, the Author of the gentile gathering, had adopted (Ruth 4:11-13) a generation of foreigners according to the flesh, that it might now be an indication that that generation would beget the Inviter of the nations, whom we, all gathered from the nations, would follow.⁴¹

³⁷ Cf. *De Abraham* I, 9, 29 (CSEL 32, Sch. 562): in eo praeclarum ecclesiae mysterium liquet, eo quod nemo ausus sit eam ante Christum uocare; *Expos. Ps.* 118. 14. 20 (CSEL 62, Pet. 311): per crucem sibi ecclesiam congregaret.

³⁸ *Explan. Ps.* 35, 4 (CSEL 64, Pet. 52): aduertimus ergo, quod propter congregationem populi formam suscepit seruitutis. cf. *De Obitu Valentiniani Consolatio* 32 (PL 16, 1183): Ille ergo pauper auctor populi pauperis.

³⁹ *Expos. euang. Lucam* III, 9 (CSEL 32, Sch. 104-5): unus est Christus, cuius regnum non habet finem. deinde nullis Salomon gentibus imperauit, Christus uero ecclesiam de nationibus congregauit.

⁴⁰ *Explan. Ps.* 43, 17 (CSEL 64, Pet. 274): sicut enim taurus ducit armentum, ita Christus plebem gentium duxit ad ecclesiam, induxit ad pascua.

⁴¹ *Expos. euang. Lucam* III, 33 (CSEL 32, Sch. 123): recte igitur sanctus Matthaeus per euangelium gentes ad ecclesiam uocaturus auctorem ipsum dominum gentilitiae congregationis alienigenarum generationem secundum carnem adsumsisse memorauit, ut iam tunc esset indicium quod illa generatio ederet gentium uocatorem, quem sequeremur omnes ex alienigenis congregati.

The Son of God was about to gather the Church which before had been ministered by a servant. Therefore, well did St. Luke (3:2) report that the word of God came to John, the son of Zachary, in the desert, that the Church might begin not from a man, but from the Word.⁴²

In short, this title, *Ecclesia ex gentibus*, is to be accepted as the denominator St. Ambrose employed to demonstrate that the Christian Church is the antipodes of the Synagogue.⁴³ As he remarks, "In the time of David, the Prophet, the Synagogue was, the Church from the nations was not."⁴⁴ Elsewhere he completes this thought by stating that, "because the congregation of the people of God, which before had been joined to the North by sin, was made the Church of Christ through grace, that it might no longer be called the Synagogue, but the Church of Christ."⁴⁵

⁴² *Ibid.* II, 67 (*ibid.* 77): congregaturus ecclesiam dei filius ante operatur in seruulo. et ideo bene posuit sanctus Lucas factum esse dei uerbum super Iohannem Zacchariae filium in deserto, ut ecclesia non ab homine coeperit, sed a uerbo.

⁴³ In the same manner, he distinguished the heretics from the faithful by the use of the term "Catholic." Cf. *Epistle* 12, 3 (PL 16, 813): in Orientalibus autem partibus cognovimus quidem summo gaudio atque laetitia, ejectis Arianis qui Ecclesias violenter invaserant, sacra Dei templa per solos catholicos frequentari; *De Obitu Satyri* I, 47 (FIP 15, Albers 40-1).

⁴⁴ *Explan. Ps.* 36, 79 (CSEL 63, Pet. 133): temporibus David prophetae synagoga erat, ecclesia ex gentibus non erat.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.* 47, 6 (*ibid.* 350): quia congregatio plebis dei, quae erat aquiloni coniuncta per culpam, ecclesia Christi est facta per gratiam, ut iam non synagoga, sed Christi ecclesia nuncupetur. Ambrose concedes that the *Ecclesia ex gentibus* owed her very existence to the fact that she arose and was gathered from a sinful people, the "people of the North." Therefore, the reason that the whole world now rejoices is because: dominus Iesus ecclesiam sibi ex peccatoribus congregavit. itaque qui erant ante latera aquilonis, id est socii et inhaerentes diabolo . . . facti sunt Christo fideles. cf. *Ibid.* 47, 5 (*ibid.* 349).

4. NOTES OF CONTRAST BETWEEN JUDAISM
AND CHRISTIANITY

It would be well to interpolate here specimens of the frequent application St. Ambrose makes of this element of contrast, in order that his treatment of this particular matter may be clearly understood and evaluated. The keynote of this notion of the departure of Christianity from what constituted the specific nature of Judaism is contained in his annotation on the significance of Eve's confession of guilt. For he remarks:

In which I indeed acknowledge the mystery of Christ and of the Church. For the future conversion of the Church to Christ is designated. . . For this one [Eve] was truly in transgression, but she will be saved through the generation of children in faith and charity and sanctification with chastity. Certainly the generation of mankind which transgressed in the fathers will be saved through the children: that what had offended in the Jews might be corrected in the Christian posterity.⁴⁶

In the first place, it was because of their unbelief that the Jews were sold cheaply, while the Christians were bought by the Precious Blood of Christ.⁴⁷ St. Ambrose states that the Scriptures disclose that Christ would go over to the nations,⁴⁸ that is, the

⁴⁶ *De Paradiso* 14, 72 (CSEL 32, Sch. 329-30): in quo quidem mysterium Christi et ecclesiae euidenter agnosco. designatur enim ecclesiae ad Christum futura conuersio . . . haec enim uere in praeuaricatione ante fuit, sed salua erit per filiorum generationem in fide et caritate et sanctificatione cum castitate. praeuaricata utique in patribus generatio hominum salua per filios, ut quod in Iudaeis offenderat in Christiana posteritate corrigeret. cf. *De Ioseph* 7, 40 (CSEL 32, Sch. 101).

⁴⁷ Cf. *Explan. Ps.* 43, 43 (CSEL 64, Pet. 293): Ita ergo et deus uiliorem uendidit, potiores emit. uendidit Iudaeorum non inclementia dei, sed sua culpa . . . uenditus populus Iudaeorum, emptus est populus christianus, ille peccato uenditus, hic emptus sanguine; *De Cain et Abel* II, 3, 11 (CSEL 32, Sch. 387).

⁴⁸ Cf. *Explan. Ps.* 43, 29 (CSEL 64, Pet. 284): scriptura hoc dicit et iam tunc significabat, quod desereret populum Iudaeorum et transiret ad gentes.

Ecclesia ex gentibus congregata, which had sought Him in these same inspired writings and had believed.⁴⁹ It is in this sense that he remarks that God had chosen a new race, the nations, to take the place of the unfaithful Jews.⁵⁰ Thus he states in another place that:

That which was, perishes: for that which was not, cannot perish. And so the nations are no longer, the Christian is . . . (1 Cor. 1:28): "God has chosen the things that are not, to bring to naught the things that are" . . . He chose the people of the nations who were not, that He might bring to naught the people of the Jews.⁵¹

Secondly, Ambrose is firmly convinced that it was because of the crimes of the Jews that salvation came to the nations;⁵² for what the Jews lost by inactivity, the people of the nations gained by their zeal of faith.⁵³ He explains this change which took place between the Jews and Christians with the remark: "For now (the former) who had been the people of God have become the people of error, and (the latter) who had been the people of error begin to be the people of God because it be-

⁴⁹ Cf. *Expos. Ps.* 118. 7. 33 (CSEL 62, Pet. 146): audi ecclesiae uocem quaerentis etiam in noctibus Christum . . . quaesiuit igitur in prophetis ecclesia ex gentibus congregata, et ideo credidit; *De Virginitate* 19, 123, 125 (PL 16, 244).

⁵⁰ Cf. *Explan. Ps.* 43, 45 (CSEL 64, Pet. 294): non sunt enim qui repudiantur a Christo; sunt autem qui eliguntur a domino, quoniam dominus uocauit quae non sunt tamquam quae sunt et electae sunt gentium nationes, ut destrueretur perfidia Iudaeorum.

⁵¹ *Expos. euang. Lucam* VII, 234 (CSEL 32, Sch. 386-7): ille perit qui fuit; non enim potest perire qui non fuit. itaque gentes non sunt, Christianus est . . . elegit deus quae non sunt, ut quae sunt destrueret . . . elegit populum gentium qui non erat, ut destrueret populum Iudaeorum.

⁵² Cf. *Explan. Ps.* 43, 54 (CSEL 64, Pet. 298): quia Iudaeorum delicto salus gentibus.

⁵³ Cf. *Expos. Ps.* 118. 18. 13 (CSEL 62, Pet. 403): Zelo fidei populus gentilium uitam sibi acquisiuit aeternam, quam negligentia atque desidia Iudaeorum populus amisit.

lied in Christ.”⁵⁴ However, while every other gathering of peoples has taken its name from the region it inhabits, “we, gathered from diverse peoples, are not able to take the name of one particular people. And therefore, because we had no name on earth, we received one from heaven: that we should be called the People of Christ.”⁵⁵ Further, it is to be noted that while it was through the error of the Jews that the nations came to grace, it will be through the faith of the nations that Israel is finally saved.⁵⁶

It is in respect to faith that the great difference between Judaism and Christianity is discernible. Whereas the “ointment” of faith was poured forth on the Jews; it was gathered by the nations.⁵⁷ For “in the days of the Lord Jesus faith arose which diffused the splendor of its clarity and light over the whole world.”⁵⁸ In this universality of the most sacred kingdom of Christ,⁵⁹ the Church from the nations is diametrically opposed to

⁵⁴ *Sermo Contra Auxentium* 28 (PL 16, 871): Jam enim populus Dei qui fuerat, populus erroris est factus: et qui populus erroris erat, populus Dei esse coepit, quia in Christum credidit; cf. *Expos. Ps.* 118. 8. 33 (CSEL 62, Pet. 184); *Expos. euang. Lucam* II, 36 (CSEL 32, Sch. 60).

⁵⁵ *Explan. Ps.* 36, 7 (CSEL 64, Pet. 75): nos de diuersis populis congregati uocabulum nobis unius gentis non possumus usurpare et ideo, quia nomen non habebamus in terris, de caelo accepimus, ut Christi populus diceremur; cf. *De Spiritu* II, 6 (PL 16, 635): qui populus feritatis erat ante, nunc Christi est.

⁵⁶ Cf. *Explan. Ps.* 61, 29 (CSEL 64, Pet. 395); *Expos. Ps.* 118. 10. 3 (CSEL 62, Pet. 204): plebis Iudaicae ecclesiam non aliter esse saluandam nisi per euangelii disciplinam, ut cum coeperit euangelii praecepta seruare et operibus implere mandatum domini Iesu.

⁵⁷ Cf. *De Virginitate* II, 65 (PL 16, 229): Hoc unguentum exinanitum est super Iudaeos, et collectum est a gentibus: exinanitum in Iudaea, et redolavit in omnibus terris; *De Spiritu* II, 38 (*ibid.* 641); *De Ioseph* 3, 17 (CSEL 32, Sch. 83); *Ibid.* 7, 41 (*ibid.* 101).

⁵⁸ *Explan. Ps.* 43, 8 (CSEL 64, Pet. 263): in diebus domini Iesu exorta est fides, quae splendorem suae claritatis et luminis toto orbe diffudit; *De Abraham* II, 9, 65 (CSEL 32, Sch. 620).

⁵⁹ Cf. *Ibid.* (*ibid.* 619-20): quattuor animalia mystica sunt, mundi quoque istius quattuor partes, ex quibus congregati filii ecclesiae regnum Christi sacratissimum propagarunt uenientes ab oriente atque occidente, septentrione ac meridie. quadrupertito igitur latere sancta surrexit ecclesia; *Expos. euang. Lucam* VI, 83 (CSEL 32, Sch. 268).

the narrow vista of the kingdom of the Synagogue.⁶⁰ For instance, alluding to Genesis (46:2-4) Ambrose interprets the promise of a great nation made to Jacob, if he would go to Egypt, as indicative of the world-wide diffusion of the Church, as he remarks:

What is more evident than that in this place they, who before were confined within the narrow boundaries of Judea, are invited to pass over to the Church of God, to migrate to the people of God: who were gathered into a great people⁶¹ from the whole world, from every nation and people?⁶²

Elsewhere, commenting on the scriptural text (Cant. 1:2): "Thy name is as oil poured out," St. Ambrose compares the name of Christ to oil which when poured from the narrow space of the neck of a vase, does not lose its strength as it spreads.

So, too, the name of Christ before His coming amongst the people of Israel was enclosed in the minds of the Jews as in some vase. For (Ps. 75:1): "In Judea God is known: his name is great in Israel," that is, the name which the vases of the Jews held confined in their narrow limits. Even then that name was indeed great, when it remained in the narrow limits of the weak and the few,⁶³ but it had not yet poured forth its greatness throughout the hearts of the

⁶⁰ Cf. *Ibid.* V, 115 (*ibid.* 230): rapuit igitur ecclesia synagogae regnum.

⁶¹ Cf. *Explan. Ps.* 39, 23 (CSEL 64, Pet. 228): qui elauauerit uocem suam, hic potest dicere (Ps. 39:10): *bene nuntiaui iustitiam tuam in ecclesia magna*. quid est quod addidit 'magna', nisi quia fuit ante non magna? quae est magna nisi de totius orbis terrarum partibus congregata.

⁶² *De Ioseph* 14, 82 (CSEL 32, Sch. 121): quid euidentius quam quod hoc loco inuitantur, ut ad ecclesiam dei transeant et qui ante intra Iudaeae terminos coarctabantur angustos ad populum dei migrent, qui ex toto orbe, ex omnibus nationibus et populis congregatus in magnum factus est gentem?

⁶³ Cf. *De Ioseph* 4, 41 (CSEL 32, Sch. 101): in the type of Joseph, Christ is described as opening the barns and selling the wheat for the price of faith and devotion: uendebat autem non paucis in Iudaea, sed . . . omnibus, ut ab uniuersis nationibus crederetur.

nations, and to the ends of the world. But after He had shone forth throughout the world by His coming, He spread abroad that divine name of His throughout all creatures . . . filling up the empty spaces, that His name might be wonderful in all the world.⁶⁴

This, then, is the manner in which St. Ambrose treated of the relation of the Church to the Synagogue. And this method of approach is understandable since his primary concern was the strengthening of the faith among the laity rather than the setting down of a precise theological treatise on the constitution of the Church from the dogmatic and apologetical point of view. Thus it is quite within keeping of the whole tenor of his writing that he did employ this example of the Church and the Synagogue to point out how God rewards the humbled to the everlasting consternation of the proud.

B. THE ABANDONMENT OF THE SYNAGOGUE

1. VARIOUS CAUSES FOR JUDAISM'S LOSS OF THE GRACE OF ELECTION

It is necessary to review the position of pre-Christian Judaism, in order to understand why the Jewish religion was interrupted in its course by divine design. St. Ambrose discloses that he is fully aware of its venerable authenticity as a revealed religion, deriving its doctrines from the clearly expressed will of a personal God. However, since it is his manifest purpose to verify that

⁶⁴ *De Spiritu* I, 95-6 (PL 16, 620): ita et Christi nomen ante ejus adventum in Israel populo, quasi in vase aliquo Judaeorum mentibus claudabatur: *notus enim in Judaea Deus in Israel magnum nomen ejus*: hoc utique nomen, quod vasa Judaeorum angustiis suis coercitum continebant. Magnum quidem et tunc nomen, cum infirmiorum atque paucorum haereret angustiis: sed magnitudinem suis nondum per corda gentium, et in fines totius orbis effuderat. Postea vero quam per omnem mundum suo illuxit adventu, per omnem utique creaturam divinum illud suum nomen extendit . . . replens vacua, ut esset admirabile nomen ejus in universa terra.

Judaism is now defunct so far as the True Religion is concerned, it is impossible to reconstruct the former providential status of the Synagogue without noting the qualifying observations attendant in almost every reference he makes to it. Therefore, to avoid a later recapitulation of texts which pertain to the Church also, because of this ever-present element of contrast between the Synagogue and the Church, it is best to deal with both in this place as the occasion demands.

i. *The Warfare of Faith*

It is to be recalled that the Jews were the elect people arising from the stock of the patriarchs. Thus Ambrose describes them as that "race of Abraham, an elect race beloved by God,"⁶⁵ and represents the Synagogue at that "Israelite soul of the old stock from the race of the patriarchs."⁶⁶ Accordingly, the nations were repulsed (Ps. 43:3) that they (the Jews) might possess the land which had been promised to the seed of Abraham. But noting that this Psalm verse announced the Gospel of the Lord and the time of His coming, St. Ambrose asserts that "it does not seem to me that the above recounts what was done by the Jews, but signifies the future: how the people of the nations would believe."⁶⁷ In this regard he refers to the altercations between these two religious bodies as "the warfare of faith" in which "our elders, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, have known the evidence, and therefore, have left to us a heritage of faith."⁶⁸

Adapting the story of Debbora's prophecy (Judges 4:1 ff.)

⁶⁵ Cf. *Expos. Ps.* 118. 2. 14 (CSEL 62, Pet. 28): genus Abrahaë, electum genus, dilectum deo.

⁶⁶ *Epistle* 31, 4 (PL 16, 915): ipsa est Israelitica anima veteris prosapiae ex genere Patriarcharum.

⁶⁷ *Explan. Ps.* 43, 9 (CSEL 64, Pet. 266): non mihi uidetur quae superius a Iudaeis gesta sunt recensere, sed quae futura signare, quemadmodum crediturus esset populus nationum.

⁶⁸ *De Obitu Theodosii Oratio* 9 (PL 16, 1200): quoniam in hac fidei militia testimonium consecuti sunt seniores nostri Abraham, Isaac et Iacob. Et ideo haereditatem nobis fidei reliquerunt.

concerning the outcome of the battle between Barac and Sisara, he sees in the triumph of the woman, Jael, the revelation of the Church which would arise from the nations (*resurrecturae ex gentibus ecclesiae*) and, he continues:

for whom would be obtained a victory over spiritual Sisara, that is, over the powers opposing her. For us, therefore, the oracles of the prophets contended . . . And for this reason it is not the Jewish people, but Jael who obtained the victory over the enemy . . . And so by their fault salvation came to the nations, by their sluggishness victory was reserved for us.⁶⁹

Summarizing this accommodation in the following paragraph, Ambrose reminds his hearers that this victory began in the fathers and was completed in the Church.⁷⁰

ii. Ignorance of the Scriptures

As the Chosen people, whose Synagogue Moses had founded, and whose Head,⁷¹ Spouse,⁷² and morning light,⁷³ had been Christ, they believed that their part in God's plan was unassailable. For they alone had first received the Law and the prophets;⁷⁴ while

⁶⁹ *De Viduis* 8, 47 (*ibid.* 198): cui triumphus de Sisara spiritali, hoc est, de adversariis potestatibus quaereretur. Nobis igitur prophetarum oracula dimicarunt . . . Et ideo non populus Iudaeorum, sed etiam Jael victoriam de hoste quaesivit . . . Itaque illorum delicto salus gentium: illorum desidia nobis servata victoria est.

⁷⁰ Cf. *Ibid.* 8, 48 (*ibid.* 199): Ergo principium victoriae a maioribus, finis in Ecclesia.

⁷¹ Cf. *Explan. Ps.* 43, 63 (CSEL 64, Pet. 306): Lex autem synagogae caput a principio, quia Christus erat caput ueteris synagogae quam Moyses fundavit et condidit.

⁷² Cf. *Ibid.* 43, 68 (*ibid.* 310): uir fuit ante synagogae.

⁷³ Cf. *Expos. Ps.* 118. 3. 11 (CSEL 62, Pet. 26): The Synagogue said of Christ: mihi matutinus eras cum adhuc crederem, sed non credebam plene.

⁷⁴ Cf. *Ibid.* 118. 13. 10 (*ibid.* 287): doctrinam profitentur scriba Iudaeorum, quia legem et prophetas ipsi priores habere meruerunt.

the nations were looked upon as savage and ignorant, since they did not possess the "heavenly words."⁷⁵ But unfortunately the Jews lost all because of their unfaithfulness.⁷⁶ Referring to the privilege set forth in the book of Deuteronomy (28:1, 12), that if they kept the Law they were to lend it to the nations as their fathers had done, Ambrose states that:

Finally, the mystery of the Church is clearly expressed. For He said first to the followers of the Law: "If you will hear the Law and keep it, you will lend it to the nations," and this was done by our fathers. Moses lent it to the nations, and he gained proselytes; Jesus Nave lent it; Gedeon lent it; Samuel, David, Solomon, Elias, Elisaeus lent it. If anyone wished to know the word, he went to them. . . . When the people of the Jews began not to keep the Law, strangers, that is, those from the nations, who believed in the Lord Jesus, began to lend the interpretation of the Scriptures to that ancient people. Timothy, sprung from a Greek father, lent the word to the Jews when he had received the priestly office, and we today as priests in the Church lend the word to the Jews who have crossed over from the Synagogue to the Church. We lend both the old and the new money. For what they had, they have no longer.⁷⁷

⁷⁵ Cf. *Ibid.* 118, 12, 23 (*ibid.* 264): ideo sol iustitiae gyrauit ad gentes, quae ante eloquiis caelestibus defraudatae inmanes et ignobiles habebantur.

⁷⁶ Cf. *Expos. euang. Lucam* VIII, 71 (CSEL 32, Sch. 428): populus Iudaeorum diues in lege, egenus in fide. In this sense, Ambrose sees the Synagogue in the type of Jezabel, *Epistle* 63, 79 (PL 16, 1041): Quae est Jezabel, quae persequabatur (3 Kings 17:6), nisi Synagoga, vane fluens, vane abundans Scripturis, quae neque custodit, neque intelligit? And Zacharias, cf. *Expos. euang. Lucam* I, 40-1 (CSEL 32, Sch. 35-6).

⁷⁷ *De Tobia* 19, 63-65 (CSEL 32, Sch. 556-7): Denique mysterium ecclesiae euidenter exprimitur. primum enim dixit ad discipulum legis: 'si audieris legem et custodieris, faenerabis gentibus.' quod factum est a patribus nostris. faenerauit Moyses gentibus, qui proselytos adquisiuit, faenerauit Iesus Naue, faenerauit Gedeon, faenerauit Samuhel David Solomon Helias Helisaeus, et si quis uolebat uerbum cognoscere, ad illos pergebat . . . ubi coepit populus Iudaeorum non custodire legem coeperunt

That the Jews lost the prerogative of election can be traced to their repudiation of Christ,⁷⁸ which St. Ambrose ascribed to their inability to interpret the Scripture according to its spiritual meaning.⁷⁹ As he remarks in one place, "How can the kingdom of the Jews, which is from the Law, be everlasting, since the people itself divides the Law, when Jesus is denied by the people of the Law . . . Thus the faith of the Jewish people opposes itself in part, and by opposing it is divided, by dividing it is destroyed."⁸⁰

While Ambrose describes the nations as having been "weak and lame in both feet," when they had neither the Old or the New Testament; he also remarks that the Jews are "lame in one foot," that is, in the Law.⁸¹ This disfigurement is stressed in the story of the unclean spirit (Lk. 11:24) which had departed, according to Ambrose's interpretation, from the Jews in the beginning, but finding no rest in the nations, "therefore returned

aduenae, hoc est ex populo nationum. qui in Iesum dominum crediderunt, interpretationem scripturarum ille uetusto populo faenerare. faenerauit Timotheus patre Graeco ortus uerbum Iudaeis, cum sacerdotium recipisset, faeneramus hodieque sacerdotes in ecclesia uerbum Iudaeis, qui de synagoga ad ecclesiam transierunt, faeneramus et nouam et uetustam pecuniam. etenim quam habuerunt iam non habent.

⁷⁸ Cf. *Expos. Ps.* 118. 18. 18 (CSEL 62, Pet. 406): quoniam a suo deus populo negabatur . . . populus Iudaeorum de praerogatiua electionis exclusus est. In their denial of Christ, Ambrose likens the Jews to Judas, cf. *Explan. Ps.* 40, 23 (CSEL 64, Pet. 251); *Ibid.* 43, 69 (*ibid.* 311); *Ibid.* 43, 43 (*ibid.* 293); Genesarites, cf. *Expos. euang. Lucam* VI, 50 (CSEL 32, Sch. 252); *Expos. Ps.* 118. 10. 22 (CSEL 62, Pet. 216); the daughters of Salphaad, cf. *Exhort. Virg.* 6, 37 (PL 16, 287).

⁷⁹ Cf. *Expos. Ps.* 118. 8. 15 (CSEL 62, Pet. 159): qui corporaliter legem interpretati sunt, non custodiunt legem, sed praeuaricantur.

⁸⁰ *Expos. euang. Lucam* VII, 91 (CSEL 32, Sch. 320): quomodo potest regnum Iudaeorum esse perpetuum, quod ex lege est, cum populus ipse diuidat legem, quando a legis populo Iesus negatur . . . ita ex parte se fides Iudaeicae plebis inpugnat et inpugnando diuiditur, diuidendo dissoluitur.

⁸¹ Cf. *De Noe* 8, 26 (CSEL 32, Sch. 429-30); *De Iacob* II, 7, 31 (CSEL 32, Sch. 50): Ipse est ergo populus, qui stupore perfidiae claudicauit.

to the Jewish people . . . that you may know that the people of the Synagogue was deformed.”⁸²

Further, it is obvious that the latter were in a more pitiable condition. For Ambrose perceives in the words written to the Angel of Laodicea (Apoc. 3:14-16) that the two termini (hot or cold) signify either the possession of the fervor of the Spirit, or, on the other hand, ignorance of the faith; whereas he explains the word “lukewarm” as referring to the Jews, who seemed to possess the faith. Thus he states:

How much more tolerable is the position of the pagan who could say: “I did not know the Law, I did not know the prophets, therefore I did not believe;” than of him who read all those things from which he might believe that Jesus would come, and did not believe! Indeed, neither is excused . . . But that one, who denied what he had read, offended more than he who did not perform the works which he did not know must be done.⁸³

And it is particularly enlightening that in this respect St. Ambrose should compare the Jews to the anti-Jewish heretic, Marcion of Sinope, when he asserts that only the Christian could truly love the Law because his knowledge is complete; whereas the Jews meditated on the bare letter of the Law rather than its spiritual meaning.⁸⁴

⁸² *Expos. euang. Lucam* VII, 95 (CSEL 32, Sch. 322-23): ideo regressus ad plebem est Iudaeorum . . . ut scias synagogae populum deformari.

⁸³ *Expos Ps.* 118. 2. 25 (CSEL 62, Pet. 35): quanto tolerabiliorem causam gentilis habet, qui potest dicere: ‘non cognoui legem, non audiui prophetas, ideo non credidi’, quam ille, qui legit omnia ex quibus uenturum Iesum crederet, et non credidit! neuter quidem excusatur . . . sed plus delinquit qui negauit quod legerat quam qui opera non fecit quae facienda non cognouit.

⁸⁴ Cf. *Ibid.* 118. 13. 4 (*ibid.* 283): non potest Marcionista: *quomodo dilexi legem tuam!* qui legem non suscipit; non potest dicere Iudaeus, qui legem spiritalem ignorat et litteram legis nudam sensum legis intellectumque meditatur. solus ergo dicit christianus, qui multum iam legis cognitione perfecit.

iii. Turned to Idolatry

Another aspect of Judaism's infidelity deserves special attention. The Synagogue was ultimately condemned because it had become sacrilegious. St. Ambrose vehemently chastises her people since, as he expresses it in the words of the Apostle, they had viewed the Scriptures as written in ink rather than (2 Cor. 3:3) "with the Spirit of the Living God." And he decries: *o sacrilegum ineptum populum Iudaeorum*.⁸⁵ In a studied epitome of the evils which they had perpetrated against God, he declares that this elect people finally "exasperated" Him when the Synagogue, "the shameless harlot," became involved in sacrilegious observances.⁸⁶

From the deuteronomic canticle concerning the remembrance of the Law (32:21): "They have provoked me with that which was not God, and have angered me with their vanities: and I will provoke them with that which is no people, and will vex them with a foolish nation," Ambrose lays bare, as foreshadowed by the prophets,⁸⁷ the sins of the Jews which had so alienated them from the Lord:

See how the Lord condemned the Synagogue because of its meretricious practices! In order that He might turn back on them their own deceit, that they might be troubled by their own inclination—who, choosing for themselves gods whom they worshipped, spurned with grievous sacrileges the Lord their God by Whom they had been adopted,—adopting for Himself, on the contrary, a Church from

⁸⁵ *De Noe* 13, 45 (CSEL 32, Sch. 443).

⁸⁶ Cf. *Explan. Ps.* 36, 6 (CSEL 64, Pet. 74): Ergo quamvis deus noster ingratis Iudaeorum offenderetur frequenter affectibus et querelis, tamen adsumptum semel et electum sibi populum minime relinquebat; sed synagoga tamquam meretrix procax irritare eum coepit in aemulationis amaritudinem praeuarcationis se miscendo sacrilegiis.

⁸⁷ Cf. *Expos. euang. Lucam* IV, 55 (CSEL 32, Sch. 166): sacrilega Iudaeorum, quae multo ante dominus praenuntiauerat per prophetas et psalmi uersiculo declarauerat . . .

among the impious whom He displayed, even though they had neither the Law nor grace, that the Jewish people might groan . . . For previously the people had not been in a condition that it might be troubled, since it considered itself alone to have been elected by the Lord. When, in fact, it observed a gathered people, derived from the nations, who would claim for itself the Law of the Lord, the oracles of the prophets, the New Testament of the Lord, then it at last began to be tortured by a feeling beyond measure. Afterwards it understood that it had been rejected. And finally, if it should see the ceremonies of the pagans it is not moved; if it should hear of the progress of the Church, it is tormented by a miserable envy. Therefore the verse, "I shall provoke them with that which is no people," is fulfilled in Judea.⁸⁸

2. THE STERILITY OF THE SYNAGOGUE

But St. Ambrose goes further than this in his treatment of the abandonment of the Synagogue. While indicating that the religious body of Jews had been part of the True Religion during Old Testament times, it is his firm conviction that, because of their incredulity, harshness and sacrilegious attitude, they are now

⁸⁸ *Explan. Ps. 36, 6* (CSEL 64, Pet. 74-5): en quomodo dominus condemnauit synagogam propter meretricios mores, quo ipsorum in eos uersutiam retorqueret et suo afficerentur ingenio, qui dominum deum suum, a quo assumpti fuerant, grauibz sacrilegiis refutarunt deos sibi quos colerent eligentes, assumens e contrario sibi ecclesiam de profanis, quos praelatos sibi sine lege, sine gratia Iudaeorum populus ingemesceret . . . nam ante quo afficeretur populus non habebat, cum solum se a domino consideraret electum. ubi uero aduertit adscitam ex nationibus conuenam plebem, quae sibi legem domini, prophetarum oracula, testamentum nouum domini uindicaret, tunc demum excruciarum nimio coepit affectu, posteaquam se repudiatum esse cognouit. denique si uideat gentilium caeremonias, non mouetur; si audiat profectum ecclesiae, misera torquetur inuidia. completur ergo in Iudaea: *et ego in aemulationem eos excitabo in non gente.*

separated from the "flock of the Church."⁸⁹ As he remarks in one place that Christ, the good surveyor,

distinguished the boundaries of the Synagogue and the Church, and ordered the sacrilegious to depart from the temple. . . . The Jews are transferred, not to some prescribed place of exile, but to an unlimited one—that the place of the Synagogue may never remain in the world.⁹⁰

He reiterates this turn of events when he points out that the Christian Church could begin only after the Judaic rites had been abolished. Alluding to the Gospel narrative, Ambrose states that the story of (Lk. 8:42 ff.) the daughter of Jairus and the woman suffering from the hemorrhage signifies that:

as long as the Synagogue flourished, the Church labored . . . because (Rom. 11:11): "by their offense salvation came to the Gentiles." And the day of reckoning of the former was the beginning of the latter, not the beginning of its nature, but of salvation. . . . Therefore, not in time, but in the outward appearance of well-being, the Synagogue was more ancient than the Church: because as long as the former believed, the latter did not.⁹¹

Connected with this simultaneity of the dissolution of the Synagogue and the ascendancy of the Church is the concept that both the sterility of the Synagogue and the fecundity of the

⁸⁹ Cf. *Exhort. Virg.* 10, 67 (PL 16, 295): Sed quia incredula, immitis, sacrilega; ideo eam a gregibus Ecclesiae suae separat Christus.

⁹⁰ *Expos. euang. Lucam* IX, 21-22 (CSEL 32, Sch. 446): synagogae terminos distinguebat et ecclesiae sacrilegos de templo iubebat exire . . . eliminantur Iudaei, non praescripto aliquo exilio, sed intermino, ut nusquam synagogae locus in orbe remaneret.

⁹¹ *Ibid.* VI, 57 (*ibid.* 255): quamdiu synagoga uiguit laborauit ecclesia . . . quia illorum delicto salus gentibus, et consummatio illius, huius exordium, non naturae exordium, sed salutis . . . non igitur tempore, sed specie sanitatis antiquior synagoga quam ecclesia, quia quamdiu illa credebatur ista non credidit.

Church depended on divine providence.⁹² It is evident that St. Ambrose draws the principles of this teaching from his knowledge of the scriptural declaration (Gen. 16:1 ff.) concerning Agar and Sara, and the passage found in Isaias (66:9) that an offended God makes the prolific to be barren and the sterile to be productive. For in this is a mystery of the Church and the Synagogue:

Because the Synagogue no longer has children, since she was robbed of a posterity of succession, and the gathering of the nations, which was sterile when it did not know God, began to have an eternal progeny. Whence it was written (*Ibid.* 54:1): "Give praise, O thou barren, that bearest not: sing forth praises and make a joyful sound, thou that didst not travail with child: for many are the children of the desolate, more than of her that hath a husband."⁹³

i. *The Synagogue: A Desert in Rejecting the Prophetical Rains*

But in that aspect of the Synagogue's barrenness now under consideration, Ambrose scores his most effective indictment of the Jews and their profanation of the divine religious service which had been established among them, in two ways. For one, he places the *raison d'être* of fertility in Christ.⁹⁴ Perhaps the embryonic form of this teaching may be deduced from a state-

⁹² Cf. *Ibid.* VII, 160 (*ibid.* 352): unde intelligis omnium creatorem qui potest imperare naturis, ut uel arescant subito uel uirescent; *Exameron* IV, 2, 6 (CSEL 32, Sch. 114).

⁹³ *De Abraham* I, 7, 61 (CSEL 32, Sch. 542-3): quia et synagogae partus habere desiit, quae successionis fraudata est posteritate, et congregatio nationum, quae sterilis erat, cum deum ignoraret, partus coeperit aeternos habere. unde et lectum est: *laetare, sterilis quae non paris, erumpe et exclama quae non parturis, quoniam plures filii desertae magis quam eius quae habet uirum.*

⁹⁴ Cf. *De Viduis* 3, 17 (PL 16, 190): Unde nec illius nobis videtur persona mediocris, qui aridam terram, verbi rigavit rore coelesti clausumque coelum non humana utique potestate reseravit. Quis enim est qui coelum potest aperire, nisi Christus.

ment he makes in regard to the drought which afflicted the idolatrous Jews during the reign of Ahab: "for the cause of fertility is from heaven."⁹⁵ At any rate, in another place, again quoting from Isaías (50:2), he concludes that the Jews have become arid because of their unfaithfulness. For "the torrent ceased because of the sacrileges of the Synagogue: because that people were dry in faith, sterile in works, captive to sin. . . Good torrent, which ceased for them that it might overflow for us."⁹⁶

On the other hand, he sees the Church in the type of Abigail, the wife of David, receiving "the divine dew of paternal grace, which is the interpretation of her name. What is the dew of the Father unless the Word of God, Who infused into the hearts of all the rain of faith and justice."⁹⁷ And as he remarks elsewhere, "the congregation of the nations heretofore was in the woods, but afterwards it believed in Christ, and was made fruitful because it received the Fruit of a blessed womb."⁹⁸

Thus Ambrose clearly exposes the providential manner in which the Church profited from the resultant unproductivity of the Synagogue. Which is particularly evidenced in his commentary on the prophecy God made to Gedeon (Judges 6:36-40) concerning the fleece of wool which under His command was moistened, the whole earth surrounding it remaining dry, and on the following day, the fleece remained dry while the earth was moistened by the dew. In two related scholia St. Ambrose develops this theme by recalling the godless estate of mankind which the chosen people were to overcome. But in the course

⁹⁵ *Exameron* II, 4, 16 (CSEL 32, Sch. 55): de caelo enim causa fertilitatis.

⁹⁶ *Explan. Ps.* 35, 20 (CSEL 64, Pet. 64): cessavit ergo torrens propter synagogae sacrilegia, quia erat illa plebs fide arida, sterilis operibus, captiva peccatis . . . bonus torrens, qui illis cessavit, ut nobis abundaret.

⁹⁷ *Epistle* 31, 5 (PL 16, 915): divinum illud paternae ejus gratiae rorem, ut habet nominis interpretatio. Quid autem ros Patris, nisi Dei Verbum, quod humore fidei atque justitiae infudit corde universorum?

⁹⁸ *Epistle* 70, 10 (*ibid.* 1064): Tunc adhuc silva erat nationum congregatio: sed posteaquam in Christum credidit, fructuosa facta est; quia benedicti ventris fructus recepit.

of time they themselves fell away from the worship of God, and the nations usurped their place.⁹⁹

ii. *A Barren Vineyard and Fig-tree*

This prevailing desiccation of Judaism was indicated, in the second place, by St. Ambrose's use of the scriptural figures of the vineyard and the fig-tree to symbolize why the Synagogue had been left uncultivated in the Christian era. In the first instance he follows the opinion of certain interpreters that the passage from Canticles (1:5): "The sons of my mother have fought against me, they have made me the keeper in the vineyards: my vineyard I have not kept," refers to the Synagogue which was unable to keep the Law¹⁰⁰ that it might bring forth fruit. Allegorically, the vineyard was the True Religion which God first planted in the Chosen people;¹⁰¹ the sons are the apostles, who fought against their mother, the Synagogue, when they began to sow the Gospel among the nations, or the sons are the prophets, who had warned the Synagogue to protect her vineyards, but to no avail.¹⁰²

This line of thought is continued in his exegesis of another passage from the Canticles (8:11): "He has made a vineyard for Solomon in Beelamon, he let out the same to keepers." According to Symmachus, Aquila and other commentators (*traditores*) of the Greek text, Beelamon signifies that the vineyard

⁹⁹ Cf. *De Viduis* 3, 18-19 (*ibid.* 190-1); *De Spiritu* I, 6-9 (*ibid.* 601).

¹⁰⁰ Cf. *Expos. Ps.* 118. 2. 10 (CSEL 62, Pet. 25): putant aliqui hoc de illis dici, qui synagogam ad legis praecepta constringunt, ut legem custodiat, uineam suam tueatur, quam custodire non potuit.

¹⁰¹ Cf. *Ibid.* 118. 2. 10 (*ibid.* 25): quae sit igitur uinea, uenit Dauid testificari nobis dicens (Ps. 79:9): *uineam ex Aegypto transtulisti, eiecisti gentes et plantasti eam*; *Expos. euang. Lucam* IX, 23 (CSEL 32, Sch. 446).

¹⁰² Cf. *Expos. Ps.* 118. 2. 10 (CSEL 62, Pet. 25): possunt et apostoli esse filii matris eius, qui uere in pugnauerunt synagogam dicentes (Acts 13:46): *ecce conuertimur ad gentes* et nationibus uerbum dei seminare coeperunt. possunt et prophetae intelligi, qui monendo denuntiandoque, ut uineam suam custodiret synagoga, nihil profecerunt; *Explan. Ps.* 36, 19 (CSEL 64, Pet. 86).

was planted in the midst of the nations. In other words, "the old union was rejected which could not bear fruit. The vineyard was given to new and faithful cultivators who could not only produce fruit, but could also guard it."¹⁰³

In the second instance, he turns again to a passage from the Canticles (2:13): "The fig-tree hath put forth her green figs," which is also accepted as a figure of the Synagogue. It is interesting to observe that in the use of this symbol, and in related scriptural exegesis of other texts, St. Ambrose not only demonstrates the suicidal sterility of the Synagogue, but proceeds to teach that the Church, through which would come about the future salvation of the people of Israel, was a distinct society arising from the same tree.¹⁰⁴

St. Ambrose explains this relation when he states that some commentators were of the opinion that the symbol of the fig-tree did not refer by way of allegory to the Synagogue, but was rather a figure of ill-will and depravity. For if what our Lord said (Mt. 21:19): "May no fruit ever come from thee henceforward forever," refers to the Synagogue, how is it possible that many of the Jews believed? Ambrose answers this difficulty by remarking that the Jew,

who believes, is not now the fruit of the Synagogue, but of the Church: nor is he born of the Synagogue who is reborn in the Church. Just as there are those who (I Jn. 2:19): "Have gone forth from us, but they are not of us. For if they had been of us, they would surely have continued with us," so concerning those of the Jews who be-

¹⁰³ *Expos. Ps.* 118. 22. 41 (CSEL 62, Pet. 508): repudiata est uetus copula quae fructum adferre non poterat, data est uinea nouis fidelibusque cultoribus, qui non solum facere fructum posset, sed etiam custodire; *Ibid.* 118. 15. 6 (*ibid.* 332).

¹⁰⁴ Cf. *De Isaac uel anima* 4, 36 (CSEL 32, Sch. 663): *ficus protulit grossos suos. quae ante quasi infructuosa iubebatur excidi, haec fructus adferre iam coepit. sed quid dubitas, quia grossos dixit? priores discutit, ut posteriores meliores adferat, sicut synagogae fructus abicitur, renouatur autem ecclesiae.*

lieve, we say that if they had been of the Synagogue they would have remained in the Synagogue. But for that cause they have gone from the Synagogue, that they might not be believed to have been of the Synagogue.¹⁰⁵

In the light of the figure of the fig-tree St. Ambrose prefaces his remarks with a discussion of the meaning of the passage (Lk. 13:6): "A certain man had a fig-tree planted in his vineyard." Adhering to a recognized principle of hermeneutics, that obscure passages must be interpreted according to clearer pertinent texts, Ambrose begins this instruction by recalling what Christ had said on other occasions about the withering of the fruitless tree,¹⁰⁶ and that the budding forth of this particular tree was a sign of approaching summer.¹⁰⁷ Then he remarks that these two scriptural passages:

signify that the vain glory of the Judaic people, which had been spread out, was to be cut down as a flower with the coming of the Lord, because fruitless in works, it grew old.¹⁰⁸

Again, this fig-tree is the vineyard (Isaias 5:7) of the Lord of the Sabbath, which He gave to the Jews in the robbery of the nations. And it is a fitting symbol of the Synagogue because

just as that unfruitful tree, abounding in flourishing foli-

¹⁰⁵ *Expos. euang. Lucam VII*, 172 (CSEL 32, Sch. 358): qui credit, non synagogae iam fructus est, sed ecclesiae: nec ex synagoga nascitur qui renascitur in ecclesia. sicut enim sunt qui *ex nobis exierunt, sed non erant ex nobis, si enim ex nobis essent, nobiscum mansissent*, sic de his qui ex Iudaeis credunt, dicimus quia si ex synagoga essent, in synagoga manerent: sed propterea exierunt de synagoga, ut ex synagoga non fuisse credantur. cf. *Ibid.* VI, 52 (*ibid.* 252-53).

¹⁰⁶ Cf. Matthew 21:19; Mark 11:13 ff.

¹⁰⁷ Cf. Matthew 24:32; Mark 13:28.

¹⁰⁸ *Expos. euang. Lucam VII*, 160 (CSEL 32, Sch. 353): utroque significans et Iudaicae plebis inanem quam praetendebat gloriam uelut florem aduentu domini decidisse, quia operibus infructuosa durabat.

age, defrauded the hope of its owner in the expectation of the awaited crop; so also in the Synagogue, while the doctors boast of her fruitless works in the likeness of flourishing foliage, the inane shadow of the Law abounds. Moreover, the hope of the pretended crop makes sport of the tried prayers of a believing people.¹⁰⁹

St. Ambrose goes on to describe the natural phenomenon of the fig-tree. Whereas in other trees the fruit is preceded by flowers, the fig-tree produces fruit in place of the flowers. Further, while in the former case the flower is pruned so that the fruit might come forth, in the fig-tree this green fruit must fall to the ground before the ripened fruit can be produced. Hence the expression (Cant. 2:13): "The fig-tree has put forth her green figs."¹¹⁰

In the next paragraph of his *Expositio euangelii secundum Lucam* Ambrose demonstrates how this idea fits the Synagogue. For in the likeness of the fig-tree where the buds of the new crop push the withered green fruit from the branch, so in the tree of the True Religion the Synagogue was separated from the branch by the egression of the new fruit, the Church founded in the apostles. Thus he remarks that the Jews:

Who, as the first fruits of an evilly fecund Synagogue, fell in the likeness of falling green figs that the awaited fruit of our race might take their place forever. For the first people of the Synagogue, as though weak in the fruit of dry works, could not draw the abundance of natural wisdom. And therefore, as useless fruit it fell, that, as though from the same tendrils of the fruitful tree, the new people of the Church might emerge from the richness of the ancient

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.* VII, 161 (*ibid.*): sicut ista arbor foliis redundans fluentibus spem possessoris sui cassa speratorum prouentuum expectatione destituit, ita etiam in synagoga, dum doctores eius operibus infecundis uerbis tamen uelut foliis redundantibus gloriantur, inanis umbra legis exuberat, spes autem falsi spectata prouentus populi uota credentis inludit.

¹¹⁰ Cf. *Ibid.* VII, 162 (*ibid.* 353).

religion. Therefore the former which was, ceased to exist, that the latter which was not, might begin to exist. . . . They outstripped the others by the grace of more beautiful fruit.¹¹¹

St. Ambrose now begins the third part of his theme. Since no fruit was found in the Synagogue,¹¹² it was ordered to be cut down. However, Peter, the good cultivator and the foundation of the Church, knowing that Paul was to be sent to the nations, was confident that the Jews were to be saved by the Church. Therefore he asked God that he himself be permitted to dig around and cultivate them.¹¹³ For commenting on a passage of the Lucan Gospel (13:8): "Let it alone this year too, till I dig around it and manure it,"¹¹⁴ he remarks: "How keenly he perceived that the hardness and pride of the Jews were the causes of their sterility! Thus he knew how to cultivate, who knew how to detect vices. He promises that the hardness of their hearts is to be dug around with apostolic hoe . . . and he says that it is to be fertilized."¹¹⁵ Further, Peter was cognizant of

¹¹¹ *Ibid.* VII, 163 (*ibid.* 354-55): qui quasi primi fructus male feracis synagogae grossi labentis similitudine corruerunt ut mansura supra aeuum nostri generis poma succederent. etenim primus synagogae populus quasi radice operum infirmus arentium ubertatem sapientiae naturalis haurire non potuit et ideo uelut inutilis decedit fructus, ut quasi ex iisdem clauiculis arboris fructuosa de pinguendine religionis antiquae nouus ecclesiae populus emergeret. ergo ille qui erat esse desiuit, ut inciperet iste qui non erat . . . pulcherrimorum gratia fructuum ceteris praestiterunt.

¹¹² Cf. *Ibid.* VII, 165 (*ibid.* 355): Ambrose remarks that this scene of Our Lord seeking fruit shows in figure that: fructum synagoga iam habere deberet.

¹¹³ Cf. *Ibid.* VII, 167 (*ibid.* 356): sed bonus cultor et fortasse ille, in quo ecclesiae fundamentum est presagens alterum ad gentes, se autem ad eos qui ex circumcisione sunt esse mittendum, religiose ne excidatur interuenit fretus uocatione sua etiam populum Iudaeorum per ecclesiam posse saluari. cf. also, *De Poenitentia* II, 26 (PL 16, 422): denique etiam Iudaeorum populus . . . Petri praedicatione vocatur ad baptismum.

¹¹⁴ Cf. *Expos. euang. Lucam* VII, 167 (CSEL 32, Sch. 356): *Remitte illam et hoc anno, usque dum fodiam circa illam, et mittam cophinum stercoris.*

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.* VII, 168 (*ibid.* 356): quam cito duritiam Iudaeorum superbiamque

the prophecy of Aggaeus (2:19 ff.) concerning the foundation of the Temple and the blessing of the sterile fruit trees, which revealed that the temple of God, that is, the Church, would bring about the sanctification of all men.¹¹⁶

C. THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE CHURCH

The advent of Christ into the world signified both the end of the Synagogue with its ritual observance¹¹⁷ and the beginning (*exordium*) of the Church.¹¹⁸ St. Ambrose refers to this when he considers (Lk. 16:16) that the Law and the prophets concluded with John Baptist, "not because the Law failed, but because the preaching of the Gospel began. For the lesser seems to be completed when that which is greater enters."¹¹⁹ Elsewhere, in a more explicit statement, he observes that "many accept the person of John in type of the Jews, when he said (Jn. 3:30): 'He must increase, but I must decrease,' that it must be that the Jews become less in order that the Christian

causas esse sterilitatis agnouit: itaque nouit excolere qui nouit uitia deprehendere. pollicetur dura cordis eorum apostolicis ligionibus fodienda . . . cophinum quoque stercoris dicit esse mittendum. cf. *Ibid.* VII, 169 (*ibid.* 357).

¹¹⁶ Cf. *Ibid.* VII, 169 (*ibid.*): sanctum dei templum, quod est ecclesia esse condendum, cuius gratia per sanctificationem lauacri Iudaeorum nationumque populi fructum suorum possint habere meritorum.

¹¹⁷ *Explan. Ps.* 39, 10 (CSEL 64, Pet. 218): ipse locutus est et innumeri credentium populi congregati sunt, qui uix singuli ante credebant. ipse uenit in carne et cessauit sacrificium Iudaeorum, cessauit oblatio pro peccato, quia peccatorum remissor aduenerat. non erat remedium necessarium legis auctor adstabat; *Expos. euang. Lucam* III, 26-27 (CSEL 32, Sch. 116-17).

¹¹⁸ Cf. *Ibid.* II, 50 (*ibid.* 69): uidete ecclesiae surgentis exordium: Christus nascitur et pastores uigilare coeperunt, quo gentium greges pecudum modo ante uiuentes in aulam Domini congregarent; *Ibid.* II, 36 (*ibid.* 60).

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.* VIII, 1 (*ibid.* 392): non quia lex defecit sed quia incipit euangelii praedicatio; uidentur enim minora conpleri, cum potiora succedunt; cf. *Ibid.* II, 68 (*ibid.* 78).

people might increase in God.”¹²⁰ And he expresses the same idea when he comments on the Genesiac text (49:10): “The sceptre shall not be taken away from Juda . . . till he come that is to be sent.” Here Ambrose sees the incorrupt faith of regal succession perduring through the judges and the kings to the adulterous reign of Herod, in order that Christ “might gather the Church of God from the coming together of all the nations and from the devotion of the pagan peoples.”¹²¹

As regards the precise moment of the cessation of the Jewish religion, it is certain that it was not abrogated before the death of Christ. St. Ambrose points out that it was in the rending of the Temple’s veil that “the profanation of the mysteries of the Synagogue is declared. Therefore the old veil was rent that the Church might hang the new veil of faith.”¹²² Thus it is evident that Judaism ceased only when the Christian Church was ushered into being. Commenting on the destruction (Lk. 21:6) of the Temple, Ambrose remarks that this seems to signify “the Synagogue of the Jews, whose ancient structure is destroyed by the rising Church.”¹²³

Lastly, Ambrose again testifies that his whole ecclesiological schema has as its pivot the Crucifixion, which brought about the tragedy of Israel’s eclipsed destiny, simultaneously introducing the Church gathered from the nations. This is the reason that throughout his writings he stressed the fact that the Jews, in their disbelief, lacked the humility of the Cross,¹²⁴ had cursed

¹²⁰ *Ibid.* II, 81 (*ibid.* 85): *plerumque Iohannes personam accepit populi Iudaeorum. unde ad hoc referunt quod ait: illum oportet crescere, me autem minorari*, quid oporteret minorem fieri populum Iudaeorum, crescere in Christo populum christianum.

¹²¹ *De Patriarchis* 4, 21 (CSEL 32, Sch. 136): *ut ecclesiam dei congreget ex conuentu nationum omnium et gentilium deuotionem populorum.*

¹²² *Expos. euang. Lucam* X, 128 (CSEL 32, Sch. 503-4): *mysteriorum synagogae profanatio declaratur. scinditur ergo uelum uetus, ut ecclesia noua fidei suae uela suspendat. cf. Ibid. VII, 175 (ibid. 360).*

¹²³ *Ibid.* X, 6 (*ibid.* 457): *synagogam scilicet Iudaeorum, cuius structura uetus ecclesia surgente dissoluitur.*

¹²⁴ *Cf. Expos. Ps.* 118. 20. 3 (CSEL 62, Pet. 446-47): *inflatus ergo caput non tenet, hoc est illam Christi humilitatem qua descendit usque ad crucem usque ad inferos. Ideo Iudaeus non credidit.*

the Passion,¹²⁵ and even scorned Christ's death.¹²⁶ In brief, they had not accepted the Cross as the redemption of the world.¹²⁷ Calvary had been the final opportunity for the Synagogue to forestall the uncovering of her essentially transitory nature. For when Christ abandoned the Jews, the Synagogue was immediately destroyed. But, says St. Ambrose, "if Christ had not deserted her, never would a total destruction have befallen her."¹²⁸ Therefore it was the Cross, "the glory of faith,"¹²⁹ which brought an end to this elect people.¹³⁰

Notwithstanding the varied character of the material treated in this chapter, the sum total of the evidence strikingly proves that the Christian Church, the *Ecclesia ex gentibus congregata*, is a complete departure from the Jewish religion. The elements which St. Ambrose draws from the Scriptures contribute in no small way to an understanding of the wide gulf which separates the Church from the Synagogue. However, although God aban-

¹²⁵ Cf. *Ibid.* 118. 17. 3 (*ibid.* 378): et hic sic (ut) Iudaeorum populus os aperuit in Christum, quemadmodum in uicesimo primo psalmo de eius passione legisti, quod aperuerunt os suum maledicentes; *Explan. Ps.* 40, 15 (CSEL 64, Pet. 237-38).

¹²⁶ Cf. *Exhort. Virg.* II, 76 (PL 16, 297): Et deridentes percutiebant calamo caput ejus, et quoniam spinis eum coronabant, atque acetum ei ut biberet, offerebant; ille risus Synagogam incendit in aeternum.

¹²⁷ Cf. *Expos. Ps.* 118. 2. 11 (CSEL 62, Pet. 26): ego crucem tuam non suscepi ut mundi redemptionem, sed ut noxii damnationem.

¹²⁸ *Explan. Ps.* 45, 13 (CSEL 64, Pet. 339): quodsi eam Christus non deseruisset, numquam eam supremum secutum esse excidium; cf. *Epistle* 58, 8 (PL 16, 1014-15).

¹²⁹ *Expos. euang. Lucam* VI, 107 (CSEL 32, Sch. 280): haec est fidei gloria, si uere intelligas crucem Christi. aliae cruces nihil prosunt, sola crux Christi mihi utilis est.

¹³⁰ Cf. *Explan. Ps.* 43, 71 (CSEL 64, Pet. 312): Siue ergo uelis, confusionem Christi intellige in crucem eius, quae Iudaeis uidebatur esse confusio, qui insultabant ei quasi erubesceret Christus in opere, in quo publicam operabatur salutem, siue etiam hanc confusionem, quae ingeri uidebatur (Ps. 43:17): a uoce exprobrantis et obloquentis a facie inimici et persecutentis. erubescere enim sic lapsum esse electum populum suum et confundebatur in eos apud patrem, quorum finis aduenerat; *Ibid.* 45, 7 (*ibid.* 334).

done the Synagogue and gathered His Church from the pagan nations, this does not exclude from membership in the Church, even now, some portion of the Jews. Finally, the brief reference to the final salvation of the Jews through the Church is developed in greater detail in the last part of the following chapter.

CHAPTER

1. THE PATRIARCHAL CHURCH AND THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH
 - A. The Relation Between the Patriarchal Church and the Christian Church.
 - B. The Age of Christianity: *De Mysteris* and *De Sacramentis*.
2. THE CHURCH AND THE SYNAGOGUE AS REGARDS THE INHERITANCE OF ABRHAM
 - A. The Jews Are Not the Heirs of the Promise.
 1. The Law is the Cause of the Knowledge of Sin and Its Multiplication.
 2. The Law Was a Pedagogue.
 3. The Law Was Both Literal and Spiritual.
 4. The Relation Between Spiritual Circumcision and Baptism..
 5. Conclusion.
 - B. The Mystical Christ: Christ and the Church are Heir to the Promise.
4. THE CHURCH AND THE SYNAGOGUE AS THE SPOUSES OF CHRIST
 - A. The Church as the Affianced Bride of Christ.
 - B. Christ's Marital Relationship with the Synagogue and the Church.
 - C. The Marriage of Church to Christ.
 1. The Pre-Christian Status of the Church.
 2. The Christian Status of the Church.
 - i. Baptism Made the Church Immaculate.
 - ii. Baptism Made the Church a Virgin.
 - D. The Salvation of the Jews.
 1. The Partial Salvation During the Christian Era.
 2. The Complete Salvation at the End of the World.

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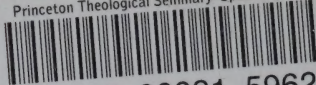
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